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ABSTRACT

In this study, black single parent attitudes in regard to their children's academic achievement were examined. A discussion of the phenomenon of black single parent families and some findings from the investigation are presented. The eligibility requirements and recruitment of families for the study is explained with regard to the type of information being sought. In the families interviewed one parent was incarcerated and one parent was present in the home. The development of the research strategy and evaluative instruments is described. Literature on single parent families, and particularly black single parent families, is reviewed and discussed. The phenomenon's linkage to the American socioeconomic system is examined. A theory is developed concerning the variables affecting children in families with an absent parent. Preliminary findings and interpretations of the study are offered. Positive conclusions are drawn about the educational concerns of black single parents. (GC)

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Parental Imprisonment And Child Socialization

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ANNUAL REPORT # 2

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Parental Imprisonment and Child Socialization

Annual Report #2

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CHAPTER 1

Administrative Start and Procedures

Introduction

During FY 1974-75, our Administrative plan was threefold. We planned to (1) retain the families previously recruited and recruit enough additional families to allow for a projected loss due to attrition, (2) to continue our staff development and recruitment and training program, and (3) to process and analyze data collected. In each of these areas we have made significant progress. Each section below refers to the relative importance of each area listed above.

Family Recruitment and Interviewing

In order to maintain the required number of families, we have recruited in both control and experimental categories throughout the year. During the year, we lost 73 families. Figure 1 shows the number of families lost and the specific reason for each loss. Despite these losses we managed to recruit or recover a sufficient number of families to maintain projected quotas in each family category. Interviewing schedules were maintained. It required arranging 825 appointments, in order, to interview 554 families. That figure (554) represents a 67.15% success rate. Administratively, an adjustment was made in the procedure used to arrange interviewing appointments that has contributed to an increase in our success rate.

Figure 1

Losses Due to Attrition
(Reasons for)

Family relocation	39
Project study design change	15
Subject remarried or reunited	2
Ideological personal reasons (Religious and/or political)	13
Mentally or Physically disabled respondent	2
Death of Respondent	1
Incarceration of Respondent	1
Total	73

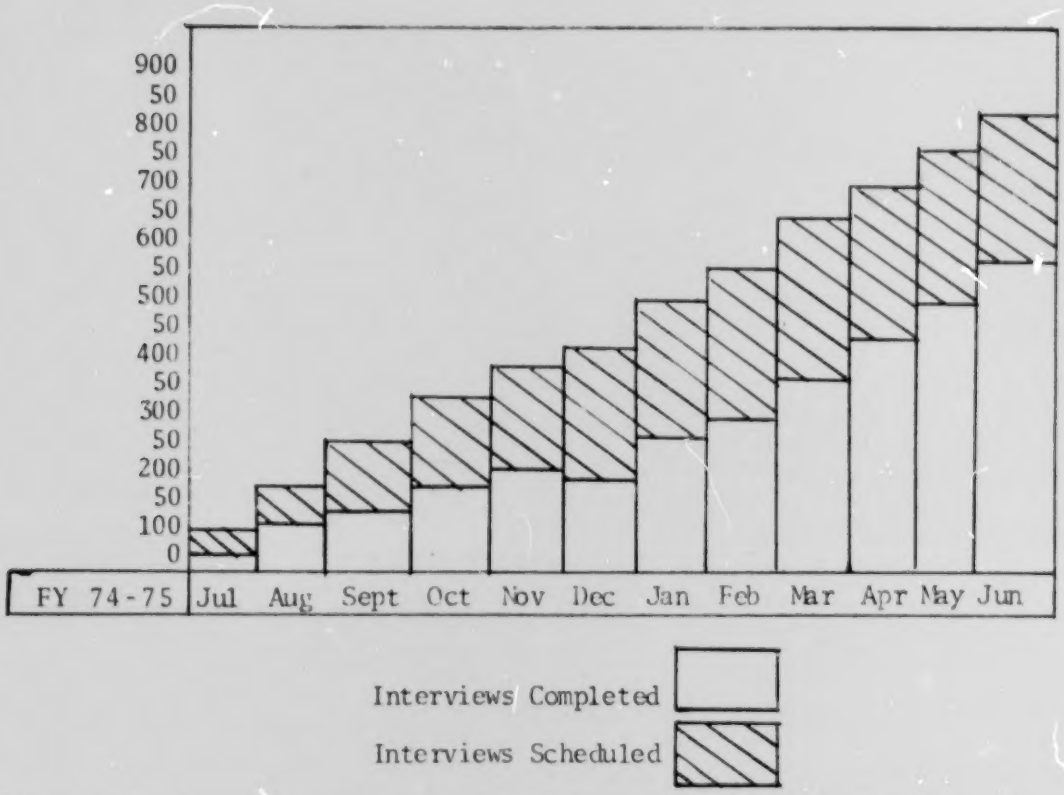
During a 51 work day period, 120 appointments were arranged and 110 interviews were completed. That figure (110) represents a better than 90% success rate (See Figure 2).

Instrument Development and Administration

Instrument development and administration have progressed according to plan. Original project plans specified that instruments (Questionnaires) would be developed and prepared for implementation by the time our sample population could be identified and interview appointments could be arranged. The major instrument was developed on schedule. Upon examination, of research findings published since we began, we

Figure 2

Rate of Interviews Scheduled and Completed



recognized a need to add a supplement to the major instrument and to develop an auxiliary instrument. The supplement is designed to gather information related to recidivism, family counseling, adult sexual adjustment, and attitudes and feelings on the issue of conjugal visitation privileges (e.g. the preferred setting and physical circumstances for utilizing those privileges). The auxiliary instrument was also developed and used to acquire information that may shed some light on the attitudes, behavioral adjustment and self-concept of mothers who are incarcerated.

In addition to the supplement, an instrument was developed for female inmates who qualified to have their families participate in our study. This instrument was developed because we discovered differences in the circumstances that influence what occurs in the family network of incarcerated females. The instrument is designed to gather information related to their perception of (1) themselves, their child, and their child's guardian, (2) how they are viewed by their child and the child's guardian, (3) how the child and the child's guardian view each other, (4) the quality and/or the existence of communications between each member of the triad and (5) their ability to reject or accept expressions of emotions. The design of the instrument dictated use of a five point rating scale that was administered to a group of 10 to 15 persons, by a team of three examiners. A total of 58 inmates were tested.

Examination of the data gathered as a result of the development and administration of the previously described instruments is being conducted presently and will be communicated in later reports emanating from this investigation. Other instruments modified and utilized during this period can be found in the appendixes.

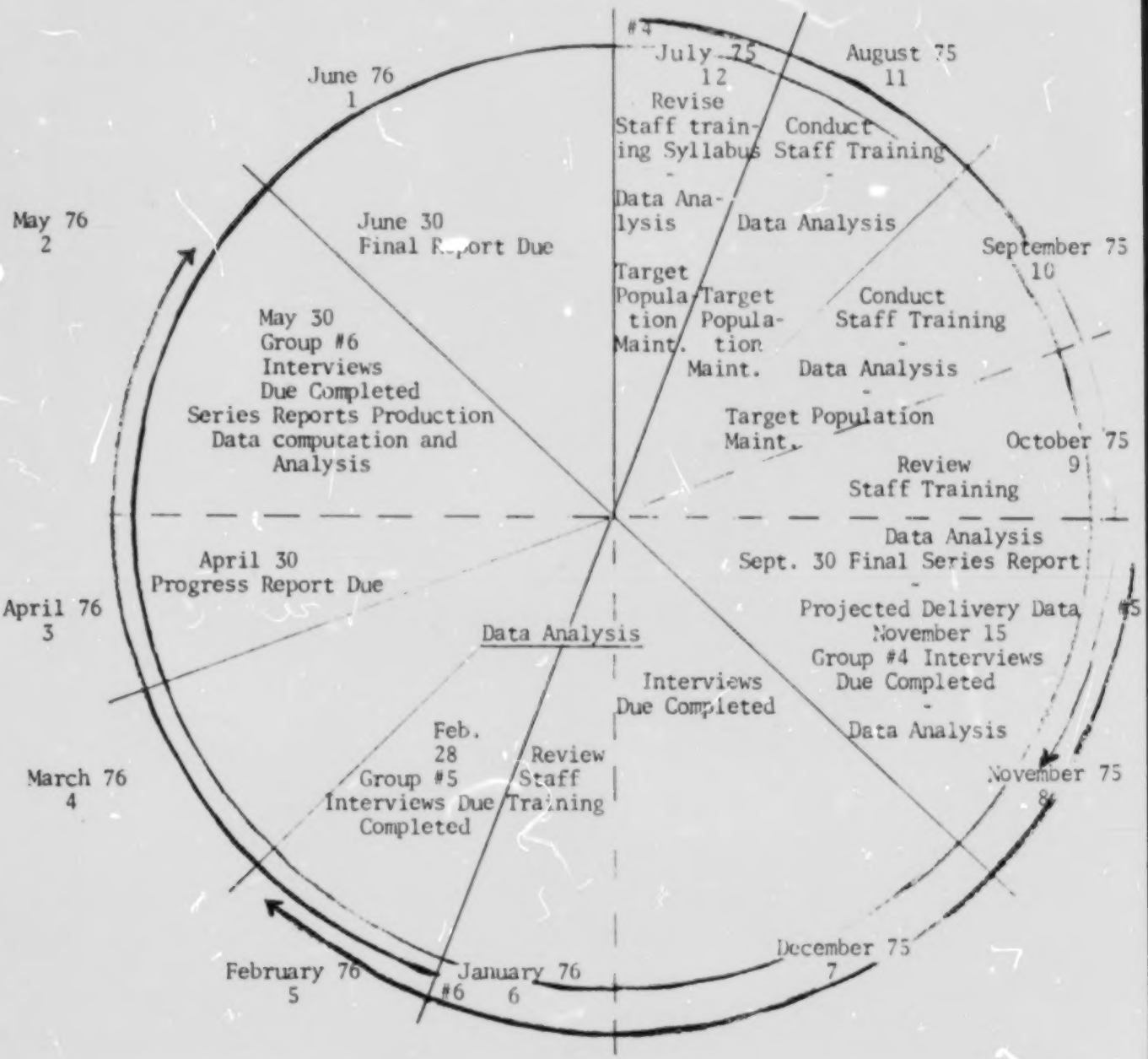
The timetable below specifies projections for administration of programs to be implemented during fiscal year 1975-76 (See Diagram 1). Operation in accordance with the

time frames set forth will bring project activity to an end within 120 days of the prescribed period. Data collection and computation are progressing within predictable periods of instrument administration. However, the huge quantity of data and new patterns in the data resulting from preliminary analysis required more in-depth analysis than anticipated. Therefore, our projection for completion had to be extended.

Diagram I

FY 75 - 76

OPERATIONAL TIMETABLE



Number below month (e.g. July 75) - Number of months remaining the study
12

#1 Indicates interviewing cycle

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Introduction

In order to facilitate a better understanding of the Black single-parent family (BSPF) phenomenon, one must be aware of the following relevant issues:

I. Conceptualization of the single-parent family (SPF) phenomenon
   A. Issues in Identification
   B. Applied Conceptualization
   C. Contemporary Black Perspectives
   D. Towards a Systems Approach in Studying Black SPF
   E. Definition of BSPF for the Present Study
II. Incidence and Trends of BSPF Phenomenon
   A. National Data
   B. Local Data
III. Need to Study BSPF Phenomenon
   A. Position of BSPF in society
   B. Relevancy to the Black Community
   C. Need for Black Researchers to Study BSPF Phenomenon
IV. Research on SPF and Its Effect on Children
   A. Effects on Personality
   B. Effects of Academic Achievement

These issues are discussed within the framework of investigating the Black SPF phenomenon.

Conceptualization of the Single-Parent Family Phenomenon

Issues in Identification

A perusal of the literature on single-parent families (SPF) explicitly or implicitly defines the SPF as a family in which a parent, either male or female, lives with his/her own children in his/her own household (Billingsley and Giovannoni, 1971; Brandwein, Brown, and Fox, 1974; Branhame, 1970; Burgess, 1970, Herzog and Sudia, 1973; Ladner, 1974; Sprey, 1967; Staples, 1974(a). However, the terminology used to identify, describe, and conceptualize the SPF phenomenon is inconsistent and lacks clarity (e.g. Billingsley and Giovannoni, 1971; Herzog and Sudia, 1973; Rosenfeld and Rosenstein, 1973; Sprey, 1967).

Throughout the literature on single-parent families many terms, definitions and concepts exist to identify as well as describe the single-parent family phenomenon. Studies in this area appear to fall into two categories which refer to the single-parent family phenomenon (a) SPF structure and (b) SPF functioning.

Those terms that refer to SPF structure are "one-parent family," "attenuated family," "parent-without partner," "female-headed family," "male-headed family," "only-parent family," "broken family," "broken home," "fatherless family," "motherless family," "father-absent family," "mother-absent family," "mother-centered home," "father-centered home," "missing parent," "matriarchal family," "partriarchal family,"

"single-parent family," "parent-absent family," "incomplete family,: "partial-family," and "non-family," (c.f. Adams, 1973, Billingsley, 1968: Billingsley and Giovannoni, 1971; Etzkowitz and Schaflander,, 1969; Herzog and Sudia, 1973; Hill, 1972; Jackson, 1973; Ladner, 1974; Nobles, 1974; Rosenfeld and Rosenstein, 1973; Schlesinger, 1970; Sprey, 1967; Staples, 1974(a); U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1974(b)).

The terms used to describe SPF functioning are "unstable," "disorganized," "disruptive," "hard core," "multi-problem," "malfunctioning," deviant," "deficit," "abnormal," "pathological," (c.f. Wasserman, 1972; Moynihan, 1965; Adams, 1973; Etzkowitz and Schaflander, 1969).

The structural terms which are used interchangeably as well as loosely throughout the literature confound theoretical and empirical investigations of the SPF phenomenon. In some cases, these terms have been used to refer to the single-parent situation regardless of the parent's sex. However, the effects of the sex of the parent on the child's development has been shown (e.g. Sears, Macoby and Levin, 1957; Maccoby, 1966).

Empirically, the Census Bureau comments that often an error is made in interpreting the incidence of single-parent families as enumerated by its reports (U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1975(a)). This error is made by assuming that all families headed by a male or female who have no wife or husband living with them represent single-parent families.

The Census defines a family as a group of two or more persons living together and related by blood, marriage, or adoption (U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1974(a)). This definition imposes no other restrictions on the nature of the relationships between family members. Thus, single-parent families may consist of parent-child constellations, sister-sister, sister-brother, or mother-grandmother constellations (U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1975(a)). Thus, one should exercise caution in making interpretations of the incidence of single-parent families.

Applied Conceptualization

Sprey (1967) defines the SPF as "an on-going nuclear unit consisting of one parent and at least one dependent child" (p. 29). He conceptualizes the SPF phenomenon as an on-going family process as well as a final condition.

When conceptualizing the SPF phenomenon as an on-going process, he suggests that the event, or the precipitating conditions, which give origin to a SPF situation is incorporated into the analysis of the family situation. The nature of the precipitating conditions(s)/cause(s) that give origin to a single-parent family situation is frequently ignored as an explanatory factor in the study of single-parent families. Yet, the differing precipitating conditions(s)/cause(s) such as divorce or the death of a parent has different consequences for each remaining family member.

He also states that single-parenthood as a process reflects a qualitative change in family living resulting from specific precipitating circumstances. For example, the bereaved family results from the death of a parent, the divorced one from legal marriage dissolution, and, in the case of the never married mother, the decision to keep the child is the critical event.

Sprey further states that none of these events occur randomly. Certain people in a particular marital category are (1) more likely to die than others (e.g. an earlier death rate for males) and (2) more susceptible to marital dissolution (e.g. low income people). The non-randomness of these events has relevancy to the investigation of the Black SPF phenomenon. These issues will be discussed in the section entitled "Contemporary Black Perspectives."

The SPF phenomenon, as a final condition involves two universal characteristics that affect the on-going family process, regardless of the nature of the precipitating condition(s)/cause(s). The absence of one parent is one universal characteristic which places a heavier burden on the remaining parent in fulfilling the instrumental (economic) and expressive (emotional/psychological) roles. The other entails the deviation of the single-parent family from the two-parent family statistical and social norm.

The SPF is a minority family type in American society. One consequence of this is that society is poorly equipped to deal with single-parent families. The single-parent family is often stigmatized for having a different family structure. For example, some stigma occurs when a mother has never been married, when a parent is incarcerated and to a lesser extent when a spouse is divorced. In general, stigma, in these cases, may increase the burden of single-parenthood.

Sprey suggests that whether or not the absence of one parent affects the remaining family unit depends on many factors: (a) age, number and sex of children, (b) duration of marriage, (c) sex and age of remaining parent at time of separation, (d) race, (e) religious affiliation, (f) social class, (g) residence, ethnicity, and (h) the specific nature of the event which gave origin to the single-parent family.

Some other major factors are income modification (e.g. financial support from relatives), role flexibility of family members, family cohesion, and various sources of community support. When a parent is absent, the interaction of the above factors can increase, decrease or neutralize the effects on the family unit and individual family members. These factors can contribute to another universal characteristic of single-parent families: Variability within and between single-parent families.

Rosenfeld and Rosenstein (1973) define the single-parent family as a parent-absent family whose "nuclear structure is maintained by one-parent who remains in the home while the other is absent, either permanently or temporarily." These authors chose to use the term "parent-absent family" as opposed to one-parent family or household. They state that in cases where the nuclear structure had never existed, one cannot discuss the parent being absent since he/she was never present. They assume that the psychosocial nature of the one-parent family is substantially different from the parent-absent family where at least conscious affinity towards a marital and child rearing partnership has existed in the parent-absent family. For example, Pollak (1964) suggests that the single-parent family situation which arises from a mother who has never been married is inappropriate when classified as a broken family.

A parent's absence has two major dimensions: its precipitating cause and the degree of absence. The precipitating cause refers to the circumstances that brought the absence such as separation, divorce, death, and incarceration. The particular circumstances which give origin to the single-parent family can be viewed as having an objective component (e.g. type of separation) as well as a subjective component

(e.g. individual member's reaction). The absence parent may be idolized or held in disdain by the remaining members of his/her family. His/her absence may be considered a routine event, a welcome relief or a traumatic experience. It is important to recognize the variations within and between the precipitating causes that lead to the formation of a single-parent family.

The degree of parental absence have five basic parts to be considered: (a) whether the mother or father is absent, (b) the duration of the absence: short, prolonged, or permanent, (c) the frequency of the absence: regularity of intervals of absence, (d) the amount of contact with the absent parent: frequent, infrequent or none, and (e) the kind of contact with the absent parent: in-person contacts or not-in-person contacts. The severity of parental absence defined by the degree of absence can be described in terms of these five parts.

The two dimensions, precipitating circumstances and the degree of parental absence, have effects on the family and its members. Rosenfeld and Rosenstein (1973) refer to the effects of the parent's absence as having consequences for the family unit, the individual members and the relationships between these members. They assume parent-absent families differ from two-parent families and they attempt to determine in what way.

These differences are evident in two ways: (a) effects on the everyday life of the family unit and its individual members and (b) somewhat permanent effects. Everyday effects refer to what is current and susceptible to change, e.g., immediate social, economic emotional issues or concerns. Permanent effects refer to the more stable changes in the personalities of family members or in the social or economic status of the family unit and its members.

Several intervening variables are extremely important in this model. The time of the absence in relation to the ages of the children, the period in the marriage, and socioeconomic status of the family and the personality and health of the parents and the children. These variables are somewhat analogous to those discussed by Sprey (1967).

Contemporary Black Perspectives

It has been suggested that race and socioeconomic status are salient factors that are directly associated with the SPF phenomenon. Black social scientists have made significant contributions towards a more generic conceptualization of the Black SPF phenomenon (e.g. Staples, 1974(a), 1974(b); Billingsley, 1968.

Staples (1974a) states that there are three concepts which should be considered in studying Black family life: "Pan-Africanism," "historical materialism," and "domestic

colonialism." These concepts will be discussed in reference to single-parent familes.

In studying Black families, the Pan-African philosophy states that "people of African descent have a commonality of culture as well as history of oppression which have culminated in a shared destiny," (Staples, 1974a, p. 70). This philosophy views the Afro-American family as representing a continuity of African family patterns. Instead of evaluating and comparing Afro-American families according to white middle class family norms, the comparison is made with African family patterns throughout the world.

Nobles (1974a) embraces a Pan-African philosophy in discussing Black families, generally, and Black single-parent families specifically. Nobles defines the African (Black) family as a group of persons related by ancestry and/or marriage. The family is not limited to household facilities--it transcends household facilities to every member of the community who is related by marriage and/or ancestry (Nobles, 1974a). In discussing single-parent families, Nobles (1974a) states that among African families there were matriarchal and partriarchal families. He states that the same situation exists in the United States but that the male-headed two-parent family (patriarchy) is considered superior to the female-headed one-parent family (matriarchy).

In African society, in terms of leadership, it made little difference whether the family was male-headed or female-headed. The important element was not male or female leadership but maintenance and survival of the family unit (Nobles, 1974). He makes an analogy to the situation in the United States whereby Black men will often leave a household or "mock desertion" in order to allow a mother to get welfare payments. Here is an example where the survival of the family unit is important.

Staples (1974a) states that whereas the Pan-Africanism perspective is valuable for understanding African family traditions which remained intact or where modified in the Black diaspora, the political and economic forces that the Afro-American family encounter in the United States which influence its character need to be better understood.

Staples labels this perspective as historical materialism which is primarily attributed to the socialist theorist Karl Marx. This perspective views the family institution as a product of economic force. Jackson (1971, 1973) suggests that in the United States, the political system has produced an imbalance in the sex ratios in the Black population which can be related to the incidence of Black female single-parent families.

According to Jackson (1973) if no adjustment is made for age, at least 1,069,694 Black women in the United States were without available monogamous mates. Although there is a numerically disproportionate sex ratio in the white population, it is not as dramatic as the disproportionate sex ratio in the Black population (Murray, 1970).

In the Black population the sex imbalance is present in every age group over fourteen and is greatest when most marriages occur (Murray, 1970). Some reasons for the limited number of Black men are higher death rates due to heart and lung disease, chronic alcoholism, drug abuse, automobile and industrial accidents, homicides and suicides. The number of Black men are furtner reduced when one notes the number of them in prison (77,533), those who are victims of war deaths, those who enter interracial marriages, and those who prefer homosexual relationships exclusively (Jackson, 1971, 1973).

Jackson (1971) suggests that the phenomenon of Black female single-parent families be reassessed not as weakness nor inferiority in Black family life but as a viable response to an insufficient supply of Black males. A significant inverse relationship seems to exist between the incidence of Black female-headed families and Black male to female ratio. That is, the percentage of female single-parent families tends to decrease as the sex ratio increases (i.e. the greater the

number of males, the smaller the number of Black female single-parent families).

Given the demographic composition of the Black population with the excessive number of Black females, Staples (1974a) suggests alternate family life styles will be forced upon large numbers of Black people. Black female single-parent families can be viewed as a rational alternative family life style given the disproportionate sex ratios in the Black population (Jackson, 1971, 1973; Staples, 1974a).

A third concept that is useful for studying Black family life is domestic colonialism (Staples, 1974a). This concept embodies the principle of one racial group being superordinate to another racial group, with the subordinate racial group being denied equal opportunity to participate in society. The superordinate racial group is granted privileges at the expense of the subordinate racial group. This concept contains some of the features of historical materialism but focuses upon the use of racism for the purposes of political and economic exploitation.

An example of this concept, when applied to studying Black families would be the negative labeling of Black families who do not conform to Anglo-Saxon family norms (Staples, 1974a). Throughout the literature on Black female single-parent families is the asssumption that it is a malfunctioning family group

because it deviates from the two-parent family statistical norm. A family does not have to be composed of a husband, wife, and children in one household in order to meet its responsibilities--either economically or psychosocially. Approved role surrogates can fulfill roles of a parent if the parent is absent (Staples, 1974a). The major dilemma confronting female-headed households is that they are more subject to the conditions of proverty. Ladner (1974) concurs by stating that the family most affected by poverty is the Black female-headed household. The practices of racism and sexism have relegated this family to a most vulnerable position. Ladner does not equate a stable family with one that of necessity has two parents because single-parent families can often function as well as two-parent families. The problems that confront Black female single-parent families are related more so to the availability of resources--material and emotional.

Billingsley (1968) labels the single-parent family as the attenuated nuclear family. This family has either a mother or a father living together with their minor children, and no other persons present, in the household. Other subtypes of the attenuated family may be identified depending on whether the parent is male or female, whether he or she is single, married with an absent spouse, legally separated, divorced or widowed, and whether other relatives or non-relatives reside in the household (Billingsley, 1968). In this conceptualization of

single-parent families, the situation in which a parent is "never married" or "single" is included in the single-parent family phenomenon.

> Because every child, at least at the point of conception, must by biological necessity have two parents, the term "one parent" family must inevitably cover a wide range of types of family life situations. In fact, for all practical purposes the term is meaningless unless a subtype is mentioned, and the subtypes would seem to be a myriad. (Billingsley and Giovannoni, 1971)

As noted earlier some scholars who have formulated perspectives on the SPF phenomenon do not view a parent who has never been married in the parent-absent category. The justification is that a nuclear family has never existed in the situation, therefore the father is not absent.

Billingsley and Giovannoni (1971) state that four major variables can serve to distinguish a number of different subtypes of single-parent families. These are (a) the sex of the parent with the family (which then implies the sex of the parent not with the family); unfortunately families have been identified as "female-headed household" or "fatherless", depending upon the particular interest of the individual making the identification, (b) the reasons for the separation or precipitating conditions surrounding the missing parent's absence which include divorce, bereavement, never married or separated, (c) the duration of parental absence and (d) the augmenting of the single-parent family. This last variable

refers to the inclusion of other relatives or non-relatives in the household. Other variables add to the subtypes: socio-economic status, ethnicity and voluntariness of the parental separation (Billingsley and Giovannoni, 1971).

The host of variables among the subtypes of single-parent families should preclude the assumption that the term "single-parent families" implies a unitary variable. Unfortunately, nonempirical writings and research have used family structure as a unitary variable to explain other social and psychological phenomena.

Treating all single-parent families as a unitary variable is often related to comparing single-parent families to the "ideal two-parent family." This family is considered to be the model family type. It is deemed ideal if it has two parents who are legally married to each other and they have one or more children begotten by them. Parental roles are rigidly defined with the father as breadwinner and the mother as full-time spouse, mother and homemaker (Billingsley and Giovannoni, 1971). Any deviation from this model is assumed to be deviant in both a statistical and social sense, with inevitable negative effects for the family, and society Billingsley and Giovannoni, 1971).

Towards a Systems Approach in Studying Black SPF

The functions of the family which socializes its members to become future adult societal members can be related to the economic and social benefits of society (Billingsley and Giovannoni, 1971). In the model two-parent family, "the breadwinner-father contributes to the gross national product and prevents a drain on the economy by supporting his family; the full-time homemaker-mother precludes the need for economically non-productive social institutions to socialize and care for the children," p. 363). Any deviation from this "ideal family" is assumed to be deviant statistically and socially, with inevitable negative consequences for the family and society (Billingsley and Giovannoni, 1971).

Specifically discussing Black families, Billingsley (1972) says that a misconception exists in terms of drawing a relationship between how families are able to meet the needs of their members and the specific family structure.

> "Thus, it is widely argued that two parent families are inherently stable and one parent families are inherently unstable. It is widely argued that children in so-called two parent families do better in school than children in one parent families, and it is almost universally argued in social science literature that Black families on welfare are there because of the absence of (or) the malfunctioning of the father. Furthermore, the assumption that Black women are more stable ecnomic providers for their families than men has not yet been penetrated. It is very widely argued that Black women are treated better economically than Black men...For the structure and function of Black family life together with the nature of the relationship between the two are fraught with misconceptions and ignorance.

> The manner in which the larger society affects these more intimate aspects of family life is subjected to even more distortion, and here the most fundamental misleading is the extent to which the economic, political and social forces of the larger society determines the condition, the form and the substance of Black family life." Billingsley, 1972, p. xvi)

Definition of BSPF for the Present Study

For the present investigation the SPF has been defined as one whose nuclear structure is maintained by one parent who lives at home with at least one of his/her own biological child(ren). The precipitative causes of the single-parent status can be categorized a (a) divorce, (b) death, (c) incarceration, (d) separation, and (e) never married. Included within the separated category is the common-law marriage situation. A common-law marriage situation is defined by the Census Bureau as "two parties that mutually consent to live with each other," (e.g. Hoage v. Murch Brothers Construction Company, 1931; Matthews v. Briton, 1962). Given this definition, it does not matter whether legal (i.e., marriage license) marriage existed prior to separation; thus the category of common-law marriage was included as a salient factor of the separation experience.

One unique aspect of the project is the inclusion of male single-parent families in the experimental design. Very few studies have examined the effects of mother-absence

on the socialization of the children. Present judicial trends, as in the case of divorce, where fathers are gaining custody of their children, lend support to the inclusion of this variable.

The strategy employed by the present investigation modifies the assumptions discussed by Rosenfeld and Rosenstein (1973). They suggest that interpersonal as well as intrapersonal dynamics which facilitate the adequate functioning of the SPF are amenable to empirical investigations. The present study has also included the extrapersonal dimension of systems theory as they impinge upon and affect the SPF phenomenon.

Incidence and Trends of BSPF Phenomenon

National Data

In 1975, 2,155,216 Black families were headed by a single-parent. Of these families, 214,422 were male-headed and 1,941,794 were female-headed, representing 3.9% and 35.3% respectively of all Black families (U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1975). In 1975, 6,478,081 white families were headed by a single-parent. Of these families, 1,285,726 were male-headed and 3,192,355 were female-headed, representing 2.6% and 10.5% respectively of all white families.

There appears to be an increase in the percentage of Black female single-parent families since 1970 (from 28.3% in 1970 to 35.3% in 1975).

It is speculated that by 1980, the majority of Black families may be headed by a female (Staples, 1974a). By comparison, the trends for Black male single-parent families does not suggest consistent increases.

With reference to white female single-parent families there also appears to be an increase in the percentage in their incidence since 1970 (from 9.1% in 1970 to 10.5% in 1975). By comparison, the trends for white male single-parent families does not suggest consistent increases.

In summary, the total number of white single-parent families exceeds that of Black single-parent families. However, this is not the case proportionally. Black single-parent families constitute 39.2% of all Black families whereas white single-parent families constitute 13.1% of white families.

As mentioned in the introduction, one must interpret the incidence of single-parent families with caution. All single-parent families do not have their natural/legal children living with them. For example, single-parent families can consist of sister-sister constellations.

The difference in racial proportions suggest that some factors are affecting Black families differently than white families. This situation warrants further investigation through refined conceptual and empirical analysis. The present study attempts to address itself to this problem.

Local Data

For the District of Columbia in 1970, 25,000 Black families were headed by a single parent. Of these families, 2,500 are male-headed, and 22,500 are female-headed, representing 2% and 18% respectively of all Black families in the District of Columbia (U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1970). For 1970, approximately 1,700 white families were headed by a single parent. Of these, 250 are male-headed and approximately 1,450 are female-headed, representing .6% and 4% respectively of all white families. The Census seems to suggest that there is a significantly larger number of female=headed than male-headed families in the District of Columbia. The present study focuses on the incident of single-parent families locally to examine the longitudinal effects of separation on the children.

Need to Study Black Single Parent Family Phenomenon

Position of BSPF in Society

Single-parent families, irrespective of race, have been an object of a great deal of concern and research by child development specialists, other behavioral scientists, social Planners, and the general community (Billingsley, 1968;

English, 1974; Herzog and Sudia, 1973; Staples, 1973, 1974a; Sussman and Cogswell, 1972; U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1974b; U. S. News and World Reports, 1973; U. S. Senate Subcommittee on Children and Youth, 1973).

Clinical writings, empirical investigations, and theoretical perspectives on single-parent families have yielded divergent views of the effects on children who are reared in single-parent families. The assumption that single-parent families inherently breed pathological conditions which have negative effects on children has been challenged empirically and conceptually (Billingsley, 1968; English, 1974; Herzog and Sudia, 1973; Hill, 1972; Jackson, 1971, 1973; Ladner, 1974; Staples, 1974a, 1974b; Sillen and Thomas, 1972).

Much of the controversy centers around faulty and questionable conceptualizations and methodological issues in the research. Male single-parent families have been largely excluded from research considerations. However, census data suggest an increase in this type of family situation. Many investigators have begun to consider concomitant variables that are associated with the single-parent family lifestyle, namely poor socioeconomic conditions and community attitudes and support for single-parent families (Burgess, 1970, Herzog and Sudia, 1973; Jackson, 1973; Ladner, 1972; Schlesinger, 1970; Thompson, 1971).

Since single-parent families, irrespective of race, deviate from the two-parent statistical and social norm, societal institutions assume that this is a malfunctioning family. Consequently, single-parent families are often stigmatized for being a variant and assumed a malfunctioning family group. With community attitudes such as these, doubt exists as to how well society meets the need of single-parent families (Ladner, 1974; Herzog and Sudia, 1973; Staples, 1973).

Relevancy for the Black Community

The issues become critically important in reference to Black single-parent families who may not receive adequate support not only because they are single-parent families but because they are Black families in a society which discriminates against Black people in general.

Certain societal systems seem capable of alleviating the pressures that impinge upon adequate family functioning. Systems such as welfare, actually reward the family for breaking up rather than together. As mentioned earlier, stigma result from self-fulfilling prophecies of teachers and the condescending attitudes of neighbors and friends of single-parent family members. Children of single-parent homes often find themselves either playing with their siblings or by themselves.

Society has a responsibility to provide the same support for single-parent families that it provides for other families.

Comprehensive programs that educate all sectors of the community to available social services support resources (e.g. day care, recreation and food stamps) would serve as catalysts for better family cohesion and lessening family strains and pressures.

The present study attempts to highlight the need for more community based social service support agencies. By assessing the sample population's knowledge of available community resources that they may or may not be aware exists, the present investigation serves as a means of determing the need for more family-oriented social service agencies backed by community support.

Several reasons lend support to the need to study the single-parent family phenomenon: (a) trends in Census data suggest an increase among Black single-parent families; (b) research results are inconsistent and controversial with reference to how children are affected when reared in single-parent families, and (c) failure to consider the effects of relevant intervening variables such as SES, race, community attitudes and support of single-parent families.

Need for Black Researches to Study the Black Single-Parent Family Phenomenon

Since the Black single-parent family phenomenon is a relevant issue to the Black community, it is imperative that studies be conducted by Black researchers who most likely are closer to the Black experience. Staples (1974a) states:

"the control of Black family studies is now in the hands of those whose destiny is affected by the nature of what we choose to investigate and the problems that seek solutions," (p. 76). This means that some Black researchers have been able to become the directors of research that deal with Black family life. They are in positions to conduct research relevant to the Black community.

White models of behavior, including theories and models of child development, can be biased toward Black child development. Black researchers will be more aware of the salient factors (i.e. by having similar experiences) that affect Blacks within their cultural environment. Thus unbiased studies can serve as more reliable estimates of the Black experience.

Research on SPF's and Its Effect on Children

Effects on Personality

Parent-child separation (i.e. divorce and death) has been highly associated with later adult personality malfunctioning (Escalona, 1974; Munro, 1969).

Retroactive studies, whether in the form of individual case studies or more systematic clinical research has shown that particular life stresses during childhood are significantly related to later psychiatric illness or personality malfunctioning (Escalona, 1974). One such life stress is parent child separation.

In reviewing the literature on some possible personality malfunctioning, Feldman and Feldman (1974) state that school phobia, psychosis, homosexuality, obesity, drug addition, alcoholism and unmarried motherhood are some of the negative consequences for children who have experienced absence of the father from the home. Munro (1969) discusses studies that have examined other personality malfunctioning (psychoneurosis, depressive illness, suicide or attempted suicide) as possible outcomes when a child has experienced parent-child separations.

However, the relationship between the personality malfunctioning and earlier parent-child separation has not gone unchallenged (Bell, 1968; Billingsley, 1968; Escalona, 1974; Munro, 1969).

> "It has become obvious that deprivation is an extremely complex phenomenon and, while it may play some part in the causation of certain psychiatric disorders, the nature of the relationship between deprivation and illness is much less clear cut than once was thought." Munro, 1969, p. 598).

Escalona (1974) states that retrospectively, the association between certain psychiatric risk factors such as family disruption and parent-child separations have been demonstrated. However, prospective studies--the effort to predict on the basis of identified risk factors--have not been successful. She states:

> "The very same traumatic events or deficits that do produce maladaption and illness in those who become patients are also found in large numbers of normal individuals, who, for reasons we have yet to learn, sustain these risks without significant impairment of personality development." (Escalona, 1974, pp. 35-36)

Studies on parent-child separations and later child/adult personality malfunctioning have yielded inconsistent results. Munro (1969) states reasons for the lack of inconsistent and unclear findings:

1. Retrospective studies can readily demonstrate post hoc relationships. Even if it is found that certain psychiatric patients have suffered from an excessive degree of parent-loss, one cannot assume that parent-loss, in and of itself, is the cause.

2. Investigators do not define terms clearly. For example, the criteria are not determined for the different types of parent-child separation or types of bereavement.

3. There are certain diagnostic methods where labeling of illness is crucial. Unfortunately, often the labels are relative to the individual who observes the illness.

4. Investigators fail to provide adequate control mechanisms in the research designs or ignore intervening variables associated with parent-child separations.

Two very important intervening variables are race and socioeconomic conditions. The incidence of family separation is highly associated with low income status (U. S. Bureau of

the Census, 1975a, 1975b). The aforementioned criticisms have also been applied to other studies that examine the effects of parent-child separations and subsequent single-parent family situation on a child's development. One such outcome that has been studied is the effect of being reared in a single-parent family to a child's academic achievement.

Effects on Academic Achievement

What determines the level of achievement that a child will attain? Our culture rewards the highly motivated individual who proves himself in challenging situations.

Developmentally, achievement-oriented behaviors can be traced to the development of a healthy mother-child relationship (e.g. Bell, 1968; McClelland. 1961). The degree of attachment between the parents and their children orient the child to achievement oriented situations when he/she begins school and work-world experiences.

Frazier (1950) states that the school is the most important institution in the community that the child will interact with:

> "...in providing the knowledge and skills the public school operates on the assumption that it is possible to establish a certain routine and discipline among students...(which)...is determined by the cultural background of the students." (p.275)

The family serves as the first, and most important institution that fosters discipline in its members. This discipline creates an atmosphere of learning that enables school officials (i.e. teachers and counselors) to better develop the child's interests and skills.

Rao (1970) has suggested that a definition of achievement must incorporate a comparative aspect. The child must be compared by some valid baseline. Achievement operates as the motivation, interests, attitudes and abilities of the student that affect the ways in which that achievement is attained. Skills that a child is proficient and interested in would seem to facilitate his academic achievement-oriented events. The question arises as to what aspects of the child's background seem most influential in fostering his academic achievement.

Rockwell (1972) suggests that nine variables seem to affect the child's academic performance:

1. Marital status of parents,
2. Education of mother,
3. Education of father,
4. Teacher predictions,
5. Sex of child,
6. Race of child,
7. Intelligence,
8. Degree of cultural handicap,
9. Reading readiness.

Multiple correlations were run for ratings on these variables. Significant r's were found in determining whether or not a child will pass or fail in school. The present study examines the effect of types of marital status of parents as it affects the child's academic performance. As Frazier (1950)

suggests, the family can foster the adequate functioning of the child in his extra-familial situations by developing close familial ties.

Several studies suggest that family relationships affect the child's academic achievement (Drew and Teahan, 1957; Kent and Davis, 1957; Rosen and D'Andrade, 1959). May (1970) suggests that poor family relationships affect the academic performance of the children. May groups families into Group I (inadequately performing children's families) and Group II (adequately performing) categories on the basis of interpersonal interviews with various members of each family. Group II families tended to be more supportive of each other in decision-making situations than Group I families. Group I families seemed to have more conflict and distant relations than Group II families. May concludes that academic achievement is best examined through inter-familial interactions.

Nelson and Maccoby (1966) suggest that a tension interference hypothesis manifested by stress within the family causes a cognitive disruption which results in lower academic performance for the affected individuals (e.g. child may be less involved with verbal areas of learning).

Kakkar (1970) found a decrease in the child's I.Q. and scholastic achievement (i.e. grades) with increased parental conflict and differences in attitude. Certain trends in the

literature suggest that more conflict and tension exists in the parent-absent than in a parent-present situation.

Studies that examine the effects of parental absence on the child's subsequent academic performance have been inconsistent in their conclusions as to the debilitating effects of the absence. For example, Mackie, Maxwell and Rafferty (1967) found children from father-present homes had higher I.Q.'s than children from father-absent homes. Significant r's were found for income of family and I.Q. (as assessed by the Peabody Scale and Primary Mental Abilities Scale, .27 and .40 respectively). Mackie, et al, (1967) concluded that father-presence has a greater effect than the economic status of the family on the child's development.

Kriesberg (1969) found husbandless mothers were more concerned about their children's academic performance. Landy, et al.(1969) found that father-absence (defined as a father who worked the night shift) seemed to affect the achievement scores of girls more so than that of boys.

It seems that a significant number of studies in this area focus on the effects of "broken homes" on the child's later behaviors or performance, such as College Entrance Examination Scores (e.g. Carlsmith, 1962; Rosenberg, Landy, and Sutton-Smith, 1969). Rosenberg, Landy, and Sutton-Smith (1969) suggest tha ACE College Entrance scores indicated that father-absent children had lower scores than than father-present children. This longitudinal study found no significant

results for the length of separation, but the age at which the father left was found to be significant with younger (three to five years) children being more affected.

Carlsmith (1962) found that father-absent boys have different aptitude scores on the College Boards than father-present boys. The relevant literature seems to suggest that females are superior to males in verbal areas, whereas males tend to be more superior to females in quantitative areas. Carlsmith's sample consisted of Harvard students from broken homes. The importance of this study suggests that the degree of absence (Rosenfeld and Rosenstein, 1973) may directly influence a general approach to problem solving, but may not be reflected in any particular test.

Riggs (1973) administered the Crandall's IAR scale, a measure of I.Q., Rotter's I.E. scale and school grades to assess the level of academic achievement in eight grade boys. He found no significant correlation with the reinforcement orientation of the parents, but a significant correlation was found for IAR in terms of the child's perception of the mother. Riggs concluded that IAR is too abstract a measure to assess the measure of achievement alone. Other behavioral measures, i.e. paper and pencil measures must be utilized to examine the levels of motivation and ability. Hess et al.(1968) found no significant differences between the father-present groups in their scores on the Stanford-Binet I.Q. test and several other

tests. A factor analysis revealed no significant correlation between broken homes and negative self-concept and individual achievement levels.

Several studies suggest that school achievement scores are much more closely related to race and income than to family status especially in low income groups (Tabler et al., 1966; Colemen, 1966). Tabler, Hixon and Collins (1966) reanalyzed the Coleman (1966) data and found no significant relation between children from father-absent homes and those from father-present homes when controlling for racial differences. Coleman (1966) suggest that the critical element is not the father's absence itself, but rather a complex interaction between inter- and intra-familial settings, economic, and community factors. Therefore, it seems unlikely that father's absence alone would result in poorer school adjustment if relevant variables (including types of fatherlessness and SES) were adequately controlled.

In a related study, Siegmann (1966) examined father absence effects for first year law students, on self-report measures of antisocial behaviors such as parental disobedience and property destruction. Vroegh (1973) and several other studies suggest that parental variables such as father absence and the lack of the father's participation in childrearing activities seems to result in lower academic achievement in

boys and girls (e.g. Anastasiow, 1965; Blanchard and Biller, 1971; Deutsch and Brown, 1964; Hetherington and Deur, 1971; Shaw and White, 1965). Vroegh (1973) concludes that in father-absent situations where the mother has more resources (i.e. higher income) she offers more opportunities to find a father "surrogate" for the child.

In general, the effects of father-absence on the child's academic achievement must be examined more critically and with multiple measures to insure the reliability of the relationship. As mentioned earlier, the crux of these effects cannot be examined without a thorough assessment of the general family climate. If there is a positive relationship between familial conflict and low academic achievement, it is incumbent on researchers to assess whether parental absence cannotes family disruption and conflict.

Competent supervision of the child and general family harmony or family climate seem to be necessary and sufficient conditions for proper family functioning as well as normal child development (e.g. Herzog and Sudia, 1973; May, 1970). Studies in this area also seem to suggest that a home with a "good family climate" reduces the amount of inter-familial and marital conflict (e.g. Ferguson, 1952: McCord, McCord and Thurber, 1962; Nye, 1958). Hays and Mindel (1970) suggest that Black kindship relations (i.e. extended family relations)

need to be more empirically examined in terms of its effects on general family functioning. The crucial variables seem to be couched within the concept of family dynamics which serve to adequately or inadequately prepare the child to function in the "extra-familial environment." Concepts such as the child's self-concept and locus of control may serve as one measure of the affects that parental absence has on the family.

The construct of locus of control originally introduced by Rotter (1966) as "internal" and "external" controlled characters, refers to the person's perception of personal control over the reinforcements that follow his or her behavior. Milgram et al, (1907) compared level of aspiration and locus of control among culturally disadvantaged and advantaged Black and white six-year-olds. They found no significant difference between disadvantaged Black and white children, but the disadvantaged children were generally characterized by higher and less accurate levels of aspiration and less internal locus of control.

This contruct per se has implications for some of the other variable posited in the present investigation such as the self-concept and academic achievement and general interest. Lao (1970) found that internal controlled individuals evidence more confidence in their abilities. Locus of control has even been utilized as a predictive measure. The contributors to

the Coleman Report (1966) used internal-external dimensions as predictors of academic performance in both Black and white populations. In the case of the general interest variable, it would be expected that the "internal" controlled individual would have broader general interest that the "external" controlled person. Meyers (1967) found that underachievers (defined as two years below grade level) from one-parent families tended to be more externally controlled than overachievers (at or above grade level).

Several studies suggest that children with more positive self-concepts and/or higher levels of aspiration tend to have higher indices of academic achievement. McClelland (1961) suggested that the consideration of child rearing practices is crucial in determining the child's level of aspiration. The parents instill the motive to achieve in their children at a young age, with phrases like, "make something of yourself," "don't waste time messing around," "get an education," "think big." Using the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, Caplin (1966) found that those children with higher self-concepts tended to have higher levels of academic achievement.

In summary, studies that have examined the effects of parent-absence on academic achievement, few have been of a longitudinal nature (e.g. Marcos, 1970; Rosenberg, Landy and Sutton-Smith 1969). These studies have only hinted at the determinants

of higher academic performance. Most studies fail to control for race, I.Q., sex, and the precipitating circumstances that lead to the family's becoming single-parent. Stigma resulting from various types of separation may result in more intense family conflict and lower academic performance. The present study is addressed to the effects of incarceration, death, separation, and divorce--not only on the parent but on the children.

The following questions must be posed in assessing the effects of separation on academic achievement:

1. What part do financial and social support from family members, the community, and systems of society play in maintaining or improving academic achievement?

2. Are there differences between the short-term and long-term effects of separation on academic achievement?

3. What is the relationship between SES and achievement in school?

4. What is the relationship between type of father absence and academic achievement?

5. What are the "child rearing" antecedents of higher academic achievement?

A framework modified from Weber (1967) suggest that familial factors affecting the ways in which a child develops the skills necessary to excel in academic achievements:

1. Total number of persons comprising the family,
2. Number of persons caring for child,
3. Number of disagreements between parents,
4. Assertiveness of child with members of social systems,
5. Number of individuals older than child who play with and/or care for the child,
6. Extent of "field trips" outside home,
7. Reinforcement contingencies for achievement-oriented behaviors,
8. General index of family stability/instability,
9. How familial situation is explained to children,
10. How social systems react to child.

These factors serve as more salient inter-familial as well as extra-familial determinants of whether or not parent absence is positively correlated with low academic achievement.

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CHAPTER 3

A Push-Pull Management Theory of Single Parent Family

Introduction

Theory-building in the general area of family is still in the embryonic stage. The works of Parsons and Bales (1955), Billingsley (1974) and Staples (1971) do offer some encouragement to those ambitious researchers who dare to take on the challenge of generating literature on the family and the forces that impact this core institution. The task of researching the Black family represents an even greater order. E. Franklin Frazier's (1939) study is perhaps the pioneer work on the Black family (Frazier, 1966). Only recently have such family theorists as Billingsley (1974) and Hill (1972) re-directed attention back to the Black family. The dismal and distorted picture painted of the Black family by Moynihan (1965) has drawn much criticism from students of the family. Robert Hill's Strengths of Black Families (1972) will likely become a classic mainly because of the emphasis given to strengths of the Black family as opposed to the weaknesses of Black families. The Hill approach to Black families represents a major contribution since strengths are building blocks and not weaknesses. In spite of these pioneering efforts, the lack of a functional and heuristic theory remains a reality.

Thus, we find that the body of empirical literature on the family is both fragmented and sparse.

Theory-building on the family is still at the definitional stage where the issues of the compositional structure and function of the family are of primary concern. Parsons and Bales (1955) along with Billingsley (1968) introduced the concepts of instrumental and expressive functions. The task of investigating how these functions are affected and the ensuing impact on the family as an entity still needs much attention.

Any attempts to develop a comprehensive theory of the family is complicated by the multifaceted nature of the family network. The first preplexing problem is to generate theoretical formulations that account for the origin and etiology of the structural and functional changes in the family on the basis of sparse and fragmented impirically-based research. The second involves the task of articulating the nature of the various family types and the third task entails translating these theoretical formulations into testable hypotneses.

The tasks of gleaning the etiology and origin of changes in the family implicitly assumes the existence of a family entity that is intact with both parents in the household. Full recognition is however, given to the fact that the extended, attenuated and other family types presented by

Billingsley are prevalent in the Black community. For the purpose of this analysis, the two-parent intact nuclear family type and changes in this unit will be the point of emphasis. Thus this theoretical formulation will evolve around the single-parent family, its origin and etiology. The second task involves conceptualizing the structures of single-parent families and their functioning. The third task entails a scholarly and logical analysis of how impacting forces within and externalto the family transforms the two-parent family into a single-parent family and vice versa.

A conscious decision is made here to go beyond the existing body of literature in theorizing, thus transcending the inherent limitation that would be imposed. The logical deductive approach utilized here permit us to make systematic inferences without the restraints traditionally employed as as guideposts.

Formulations are presented under the following four areas:

1. Relevant issues
2. Etiology of single-parent families
3. Origin of single-parent families
4. Methodological approach to research on single-parent families.

A set of testable postulates is presented under each area, some of which will be emprically tested in the present

Parental Imprisonment Project. It would not prove feasible to test all of these postulated in this single project. Thus, further research is implicated.

Relevant Issues

Any valid theory of the single-parent family must unravel the confusion evolving around the change of the two-parent family to single-parent family. The first point of clarification to be made is that the single-parent family is an intact family unless more than one family member severs ties with other family members. The critical criterion is severing of ties. Physical removal from the household is not the critical issue, even in the cases of divorce, separation, or the imprisonment of a parent or death of a parent where family functions and the social boundaries of the family are often maintained. Thus the family unit is intact if one parent stays in the home and carries on family functions. On the other hand, the family is not intact when one or two family members severs ties with the family and when family functions are disrupted.

This means that any family that loses members that perform critical roles (i.e. breadwinner, model type, etc.) for family functioning that family is considered a non-intact family. Put differently, intact families are those that maintain family functions irrespective of members lost. Non-intact families are those that do not maintain family functions regardless of the family structure.

Billingsley (1968) and other family theorists (Ladner, 1971; English, 1974; Herzog and Sudia, 1973; Hill, 1972) challenge the validity of the assumption that "two-parentness" indicates stability and is ideal for child rearing and that "single-parentness" represents instability and is not conducive to child rearing. It cannot be denied that the absence of a parent does affect the functioning of the family unit. However, to draw conclusions about family functioning on the basis of family structure is misleading. This is evident by the existence of healthy single-parent families. As pointed out above, some attention must be given to the nature of the roles and functions of the absent parent.

Postulate #1

> Family functioning will be maintained if critical role inputs are maintained via such means as role substitution or compensatory role sharing. When critical role performers leave or are taken out of the home without substitution or replacement, family functions suffer eventually leading to non-intact single-parent families.

The second clarification needed is that single-parent families are synonomous with families with absent parentage by choice (separation or divorce) or force (parental incarceration or death). The concept of voluntary vs. involuntary separation is not used here to refer to seperation by choice or force because voluntary separation is non-existing. THere are always internal or external forces that either push or

pull a couple apart. This concept is called the two-way push-pull valence. It is two-way in that a valence can draw the parents together just as others can separate the parents. This concept is developed further in a later section.

The third issue is the definition of a single-parent family (SPF), defined here structurally as a family in which a parent, either mother or father, is separated from the family household but the other parent resides in the household with the children. Sprey (1967) defines the single-parent family process as an on-going nuclear unit with a single-parent and at least one dependent child. Sprey's conceptualizaton of the SPF is functional in that it suggests a network of defined relationships where the parties interact as well as respond to social, economic and political forces prior to and during the single-parent status. The present theoretical framework treats the SPF in terms of its functioning and less in terms of its structure.

The value of a theory lies in its explanatory dimension. In the case of single-parent family theory, the following shoudl be addressed in the theory:

1. Factors that lead to single-parent families in general as differences along ethnic lines.

2. Prevention of single-parent families.

3. Factors that reunite the marriage and factors that lead to the return of the parent to the family household or

factors that prevent his/her return to the family except in the case of death.

Etiology of single-parent families (SPF)

Any theory of SPF must account for the causative factors leading to single parent families. That is, what are the causes that push or pull a couple apart leading one family member to physically leave the household. Two assumptions are made here. First, ther had existed a marriage, legally or common-law, prior the family becoming a single-parent family. Secondly, there are dependent children living in the household wiht one male or female parent. Now let us turn to the core of our analysis of etiological factors.

In many respects the term single-parent family does not accurately reflect what happens in the family. The key event is that marital ties are severed in the form of divorce, legal separation, desertion or death. Forced physical removal of a parent constitutes another category of SPF's where severance of marital ties may or may not be the case. Thus the critical theoretical task is to discern the common underlying dynamics of all of these separations between couples.

Two-way Push-pull Phenomenal Forces Model

Causes of separation of parents have been attributed to a wide range of social psychological, economic and social factors. However, it is insufficient to merely enumerate

these factors. The more challenging task is to conceptualize the interrelationships among these factors and illustrate how these lead to separation of parents and the absence of the parent from the household.

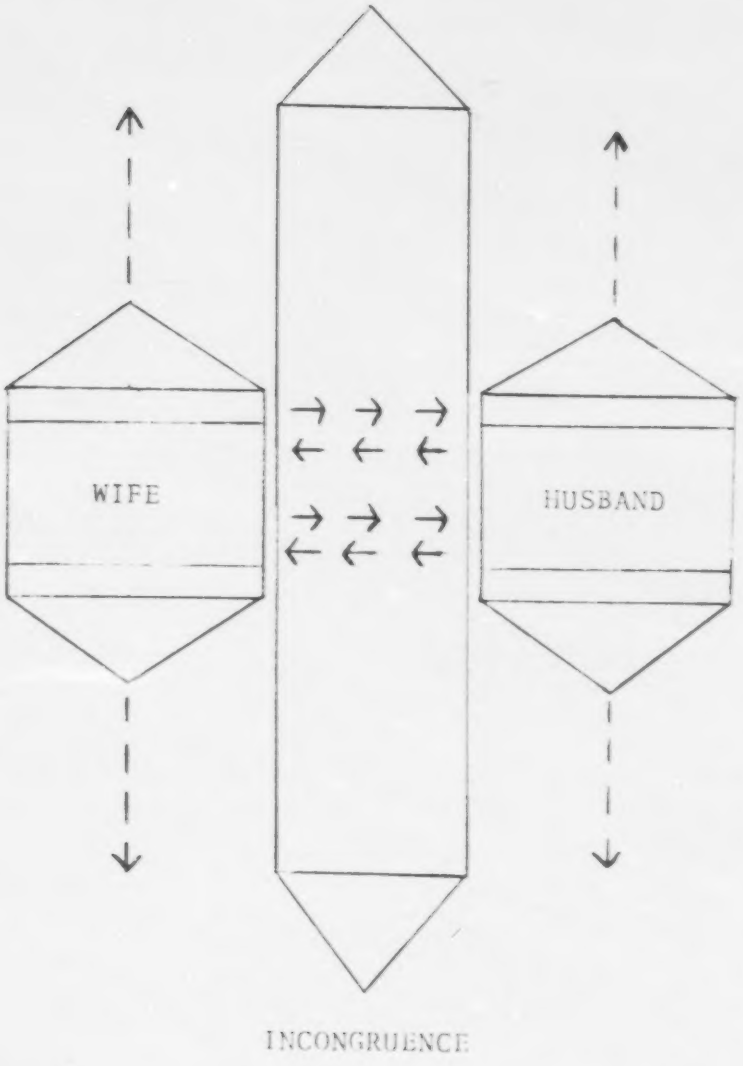
Push-pull Phenomenal Forces

Each of the married partners brings to the marriage differences in family and educational backgrounds, attitudes and beliefs and personality characteristics. These differences are confounded by impacting economic and political systemic forces emanating outside the family. These background and impacting forces can have both potentially negative or positive consequences for the marriage and family depending upon the effectiveness with which the couple and other family members collectively or individually manage the above forces conceptualized here as the "two-way push-pull phenomenal forces." Management of these forces by the couple and other family members in turn is dependent upon the level of congruence and/or incongruence in expectations held by those in the family and the married partners in particular. This concept is termed the "expectation congruence-incongruence phenomenon." The two-way push-pull congruence model is depicted in Diagram A.

The nature of the outside impacting forces or forces within the family unit and how they impact are two complex to articulate. This is because the magnitude of the impact

Diagram A

Two-Way Push-Pull Congruence Model



depends upon the number of forces impacting at any single time frame, the level of existing family functioning, role feasibility in the family, which family member is targeted by the forces, the initial and ongoing financial and moral resources available to the family and the quality of the problem-solving skills and mechanisms in the family. Since the family is a complexity of interrelated units (family members), all impacting forces set off some reaction throughout the family when any member or member's role is targeted. The reactionary effects do vary, however, dependent upon how crucial the targeted role performer is to the functioning of the family unit. For example, the family would be affected less if an unskilled father becomes unemployed than if a skilled mother becomes unemployed who possesses more earning power than the father. Incarceration of, or addiction in a mother, traditionally the primary child caretaker, would have greater effects on the family than if this happened to the father.

Postulate #2

Impacting forces, positive or negative ones, targeted at critical role performers will have greater effects on the family. It would be possible to predict the magnitude of the effects on the family based on knowledge of how crucial the role performer.

Postulate #3

The level of readustment and maintenance of functions in the family is related to the level of role flexibility in the family.

Postulate #4

The level of family readjustment and maintenance is directly related to the counter-effects of systems and institutional support systems.

Congruence-Incongruence Expectation Dimension

Congruence and incongruence in expectations refer to differential mind sets that family members hold regarding observation, interpretation and/or intervention strategies for responding to general life situations and impacting push and pull forces in particular. Extreme levels of congruence or incongruence will eventually become problematic for the family.

Postulate #5

There is a curvilinear relationship between the general level of congruence within the family and on the level of efficiency in managing the two way push-pull phenomenal forces. Thus extreme levels of congruence or incongruence in expectations are counterproductive, suggesting that there is an optional point on the congruence-incongruence of expectation continuum.

Management of Congruence-Incongruence Around Forces

The theoretical formulations thus far have evolved around two etiological factors leading to SPF, namely congruence-incongruence expectations and the push-pull phenomenal forces. How these two factors are managed is the critical determinant of single-parentness. Effective management here would be indicated by balance which is a natural striving in social systems. That is, when a family finds itself confronted with

a problem, tensions are set up in that family. The members of that family, in an effort to restore balance to the family network, will attempt to resolve the problem.

Management Task #1

There are two management tasks involved in preventing "single-parentness" and maintaining balance in the family after separation. The first task is to minimize incongruence between and/or among expectations (including perceptions and problem solving approaches) of members in the family in particular between the parents. Family members other than parents are integral parties in the problem solving effort and would play some role in reducing incongruence. The outcome of this management task depends upon how many family members engage in the problem solving task and the level of energy invested by each in coming to agreement on goals and strategies. For the purpose of this discussion, this energy investment will be termed "agreement energy."

Two concepts are posited here. The first is "unilateral agreement energy" which refers to the tendency toward coordinated and common investment of energy by family members on agreed upon goals and strategies for managing internal and external forces. Unilateral agreement may be accompanied by high, medium or low investment of energy on the part of family members.

Postulate #6

There is a direct relationship between balance in the family and marital harmony and amount of agreement energy invested in manageing the push and pull forces. This applies to both two-parent families and single-parent families. This thesis gives recognition that the single-parent, like the two-parent interact and interface with both internal forces and systemic forces in the management effort.

The second concept is "unilateral disagreement energy" which refers to the tendency toward uncoordinated efforts and disagreement over goals and strategies for managing the push and pull forces. This disagreement may be accompanied by low, medium, or high levels of energy on the part of family members.

Postulate #7

There is a direct relationship between marital separation, family adjustment or family readjustment and unilateral disagreement energy, such that marital separation and family disequilibrium will increase with increase in unilateral disagreement.

The level of unilateral agreement or disagreement energy invested prior to separation will have residual effects on family adjustment and balance after separation. Implicily, a two-parent family that traditionally worked together to solve problems will evidence a similar pattern afterwards.

Postulate #8

There will be a direct relationship between parent separation and family cohesion.

Postulate #9

High agreement energy investment between parents will correlate with high agreement energy investment that is consistent with the parents.

Postulate #10

High disagreement energy investment between parents will correlate with high disagreement energy investment that is inconsistent with the parents.

The second management task entails allocation and maximizing on existing personal and material resources and negotiating for support resources in the larger social system. The general goal of this task is the maintenance of the expressive and instrumental family functions (Parsons and Bales, 1955; Billingsley, 1968). The difficulty in implementing this task lies in the counter-forces in the larger society. Simply put the institutions of the larger society are not supportive of American families whether Black or non-Black. This is particularly evident in the case of Black families where racism is the eminent threat to the well-being of Blacks.

The number of single-parent families is high among both Blacks and whites, but disproportionately higher among Blacks. The critical determinant of this Black-white differential in single-parent family population is institutional racism.

Postulate #11

The primary etiological factor responsible for the relatively higher proportion of Black single-parent families is institutional racism. Institutional racism is defined here as prejudical discriminatory treatment and practices that have become institutionalized. This form of racism exists even after law is initiated which forbids such practices, yet no compensatory measures are taken to correct the existing evil or harm that occured prior to that law.

Postulate #12

The disadvantaged economic and social status of Blacks and the economic and social advantaged status of whites are a direct consequence of overt prejudicial discriminatory practices levied against Blacks prior to the passage of anti-discriminatory laws.

Postulate #13

Since there are no measures built into existing anti-discrimatory laws for helping Black families to "catch up," Black families are not equipped to take advantage of available social, educational, and economic resources.

Postulate #14

American institutions are couched in Anglo-Saxon values which are often inconsistent with value orientations of Blacks. Thus in order to make use of existing social, educational, and economic resources would mean that Blacks would have to sacrifice many of their beliefs and attitudes, for example, a Black father who is denied a decent paying job has to leave his household in order that his wife may qualify for welfare assistance.

Another factor contributing to the relatively higher proportion of Black single-parent families is the drastic shortage of available Black males (Jackson, 1971). This is largely due to the large number of Black male deaths in wars and the huge populatio of young adult males locked up in prisons and jails. In both of these cases Black males are forced out of the home whether they are single or married.

The greater longevity of females over males in general and the greater longevity of whites over Blacks contribute to the higher proportion of Black single-parent families.

The above section has attempted to glean the dynamics of single-parent families and the maintenance of balance in the family prior to and after separation. We have also analyzed the nature of the management of push and pull forces that either divide or hold the family together. Unfortunately these forces too often divide the family. Finally we have pointed up how institutional racism has left the legacy of disadvantaged status for Blacks who are ill-equipped to take advantage of existing resources. Now our discussion will address the issue of the origin or factors leading to single-parent families and family disequilibrium.

Origin of Single-Parent Family

The origin of SPF lies in the American value configuration of individualism and completion which are antithetical to the value configurations of collectivism and cooperation, the essentials for the existence of the marriage union and the family social subsystem. The paradoxical reality is that children and adults are exposed to both throughout their lives. One problemetic consequence of this paradox is anomie where either marriage or single status constitute ideals in the society. Neither is right or wrong or preferred or unpreferred.

The second source of SPF is the emerging redefinition of the female's role that has in the past been associated with dependency on the male and subservience that has been ascribed

to the female role. The assertion of independence and competitiveness on the part of females is directed toward the establishment of an equalitarian parent role structure. This trend toward an equalitarian role structure is antithetical to the traditional hierarchical role structure of the society where certain roles are valued more than other roles.

Postulate #15

The SPF picture will become more dismal until such time that the equalitarian parent role structure becomes a reality.

Methodological Issues: Single Parent Family

The theoretical framework set forth here dealth with two broad areas that have implications for empirical research. These areas include social psychological variables and impacting systems variables. The former involves how the parents and other family members respond to internal and external impacting forces. The latter covers the nature of the impact of societal social systems and the interaction of these with the family subsystem. We will articulate some of the general parameters that must be considered in investigating single-parent families. The parental imprisonment project reported in this document provides a model for this discussion.

While the analysis focuses on the Black family, much of the formulation could be generalized to other non-Black families. Such generalizations must, however, be guided by

the fact that Black and white families occupy different vantage points within the society. A number of differences are pointed out in an earlier section of this analysis.

The general research strategy for the prison project is an investigation of societal systems (economic, legal, educational, health, recreational, political, and media) that interact with and impact the family system and the child both directly and indirectly. The investigation primarily focuses on how the interaction and impact is perceived by both adults and children in the family. In addition to perceptions, the research taps the nature of the impact of the systems on the children and the family as an entity. Thus data is generated on the interfacing of societal systems with the family systems and how children are affected by and respond to these impinging systemic forces.

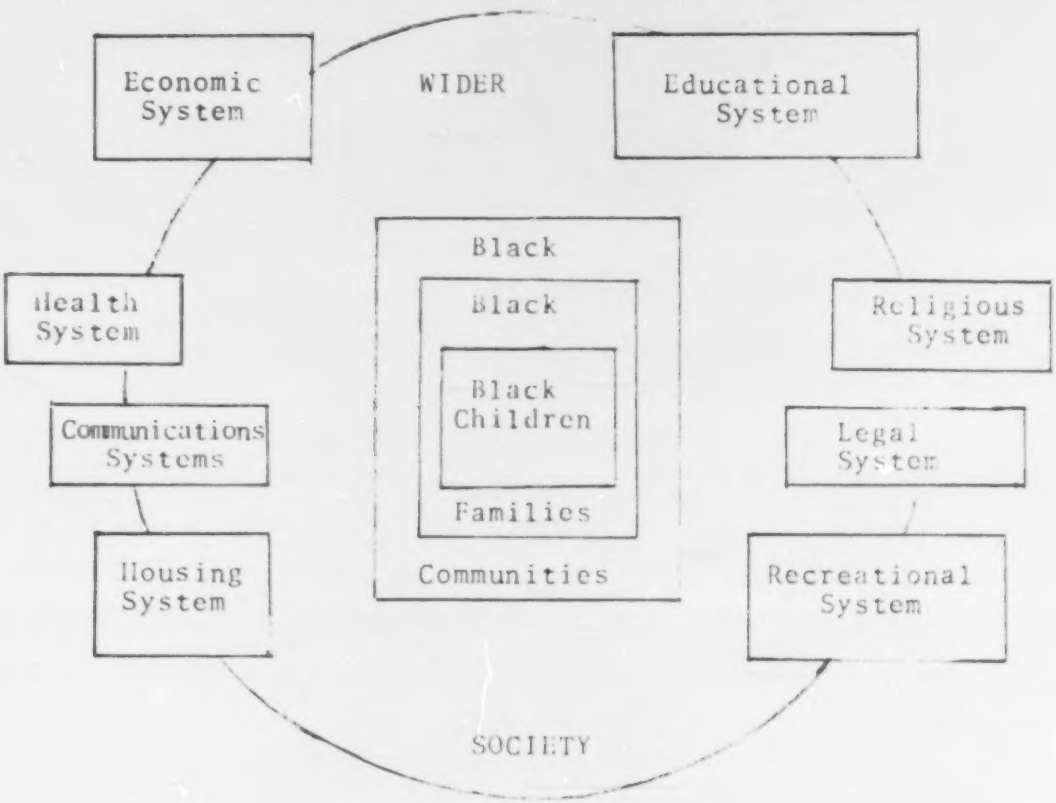
The family, perceived as a prototype institution of our society, has received extensive analysis at the social level, but very limited analysis at the social psychological level. This latter level of anlaysis entails an assessment of how societal systems impact the family unit and how family members in turn are affected by, and respond to, these extra-familial impacting forces.

Billingsley (1974) gives the most in-depth analysis that somewhat focuses on the social psychological impact of systems

on the Black Family. Billingsley posits eight systems (Figure 1) that impact the larger Black community. This model suggests that Black children are sheltered by the Black community, and the Black family unit secondly. Presumably, these are mediators between the child and the larger society. The model does not, however, account for the direct interactions that

Figure 1*

Impact of Systems on the Black Family

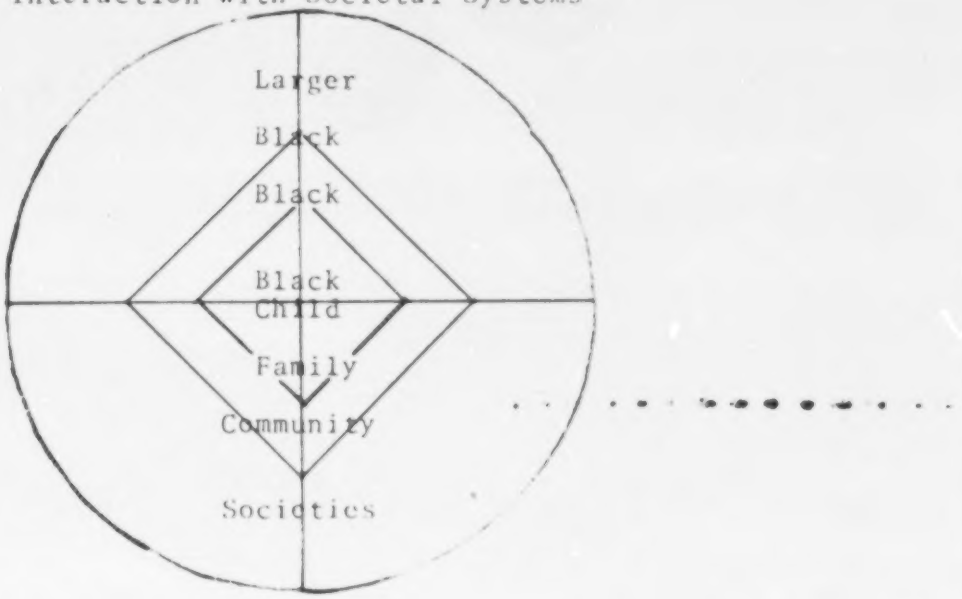


children have with the systems of the larger society such as educational, legal, health, and communications systems.

*Taken from Andrew Billingsley. Black Families and the Struggle for Survival, New York, Friendship Press, 1974, p. 75.

This is not to suggest or negate the fact that parents and the community do make input into the child's interpretation and decisions about his/her dealings with the larger societal system. Basil Matthews suggested a model that would reflect the direct interactions that the child has with these societal systems. The "cross" running through the interaction line snows that all systems, including the child are in constant contact with each other (Figure 2). The broken lines are utilized to show the flow of communications and interactions within the Black community.

Figure 2
Children and Their
Interaction with Societal Systems

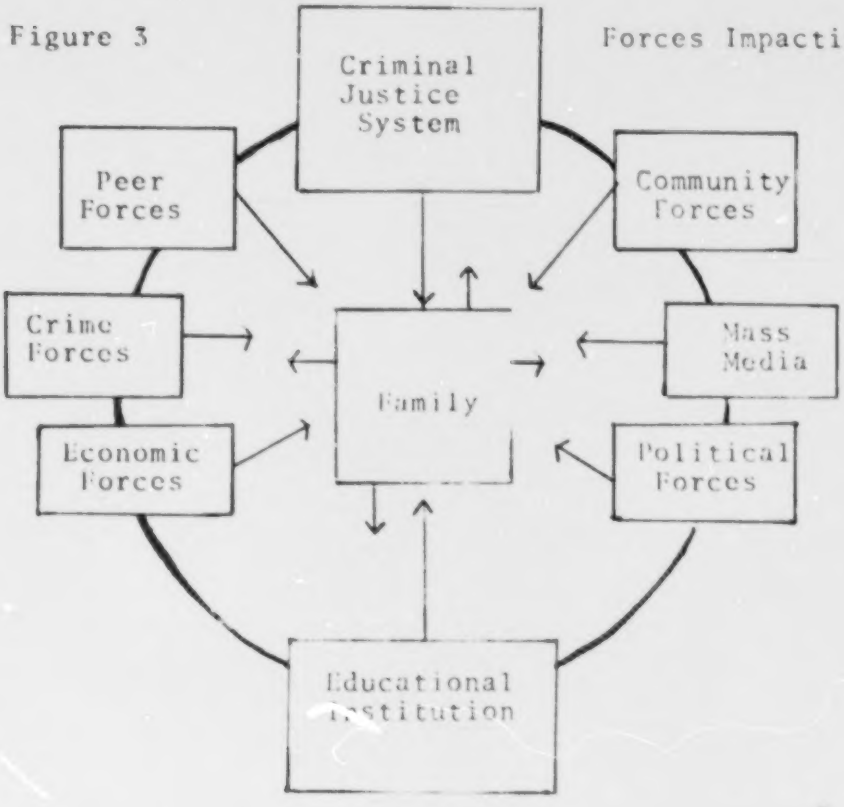


Matthew's model is consistent with the concept of "shared socialization" where societal institutions such as the school system play a major role in educating the children fo the family. While families still maintain some control of the entire socialization, this control is being progressively taken over by societal systems such as the legal system, peers, visual media and the MacDonald movement. Although the sharing process takes place, often the impact is negative in terms of disrupting the family process as when the legal system incarcerates an adult parent.

Parsons and Bales (1955) and Billingsley (1968) conceptualize the family as a social subsystem of the wider social system. A system is an organization of interrelated structures and or functions. Specifically social systems consist of a complex of individuals interacting with other individuals or groups around snared values and institutions. While Parsons and his associate do empnasize the mutual interaction and interdependence among the social subsystems of society, too little attention is given to the issue of the degree of interaction interdependence among these suosystems. Ideally there should be mutual interaction and interdependence among the subsystems, but in reality this evident in terms of the impacting effects of tnese social systems on eacn other.

The family lies at the core of all other social systems and is therefore impacted from all angles by the other subsystems. Figure 3 below depicts the penetrating individual and collective forces that the family often obsorbs. The family, unlike many other sybsystems such as the school, cannot shirk its responsibility to either its members or itself. While the family receives impacting assaults from all angles, society gives little support to this subsystem for self-defense and its members. The extent to which the family weathers these assults is directly related to the initial economic, moral and spiritual resources available to the family or the resources that it can muster from societal institutions or other subsystems.

Figure 3 Forces Impacting the Family



These individual and collective forces often impact with such a thrust that the family is often molded out of shape, divided or segmentalized or split. This often occurs when families are confronted with sudden economic, social, or health crises. In such cases it is not unusual to find intra-familial parent-child, parental and sibling conflicts and divisions that absorb what available resources and resilence the family possess.

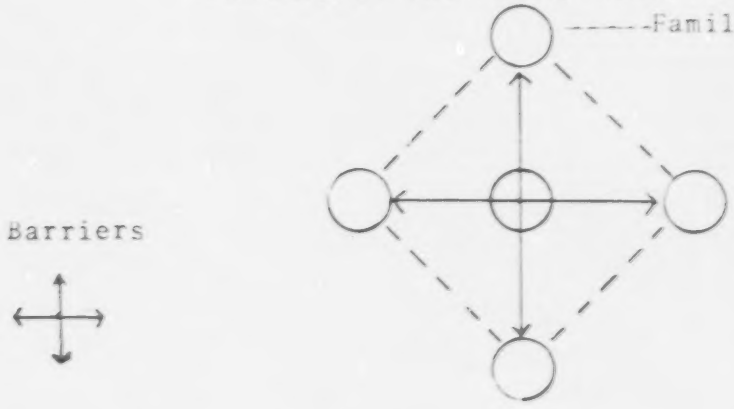
Thus far, our discussion has left the family intact notwithstanding the many forces impacting it. However, the more serious consequence is the removal or separation of the family's most vital resource, its members such as in the cases of spearation, divorce. or removal of a parent or child by the criminal justice system. In Figure 4 we see impacting forces penetrating the boundaries of the family social system and pushing members out of the unit by severing family ties. This is possible because family boundaries are of necessity flexible and easily penetrable.

Figure 4 also depicts how economic and legal barriers are often situated within the family network of relationships, thus dividing the family. Not only are the family members physically and psychologically separated, but the domain of the family is expanded economically, socially and psychologically to incorporate into its complex network foreign

elements such as the substitutions of social relationships, economic loss of bread winner, hostile relationships with the criminal justice system, stereotype of single-parentage or of having a parent in prison and barriers to adequate academic performance among children. In a real sense, societal institutions and forces imbed themselves within the family network and take on a substitute role, which rarely yields any measure of success. Mainly because society has not attempted to, nor should it, create viable substitutes for the family subsystem.

Figure 4

Forces Penetrating the
Boundary of the Family Subsystem



Given the unique roles and functions of the family and its unique inherent capability to perform these roles and responsibilities, it is mandatory that the society augment this unit in any way possible. Let us focus on one of the societal institutions that shares in the socialization function of the family, namely the educational system. The

school system is meeting with increasing failure in its unilateral approach. The concept of community control is a step in the direction of rejuvenating the family's primary role of educating its members.

Analytical Paradigm for the Prison Project

The parent-absent family is defined as one whose nuclear structure is maintained by one parent who remains in the home while the other is absent, either permanently or temporarily. It is realized that the absent parent is generally the father, however, the more inclusive term "parent-absent" is used to include those less frequent cases in which the family structure is maintained by the father in the absence of the mother.

In order to get an understanding of the meaning of parental absence, Rosenfeld and Rosenstein (1973) developed a model differentiating some of the elements which goes into the parents absence from his/her family. Their approach has two major dimensions: its precipitative cause and its degree. The precipitating cause refers to the circumstances that brought about the absence, and the degree of absence refers primarily to the amount or extent of the parent's absence (See Chart 1).

Parental absence is connected with familial disruption as in the case of divorce and separation. Here we will analyze the kind of disruption in the family network that

created situations wherein the parent who leave maintains only limited contact with, and some responsibility for the family, particularly in relation to the children. Often in its extremes such disruption is in the nature of the kind of total absence as in the case of the deserting parent, or the parent who dies. On the other hand, we will analyze a somewhat analogous absence, namely that of the parent who is in prison. Here we will glean the burden of social stigma. Although absent parents are unable to function in their normal family roles, they remain family members functionally, and it is usually assumed that they will return home.

Five basic elements will be used to tap what has been called the degree of absence with precision. These are:

1. Which parent is absent: mother or father.
2. Duration of absence: Short, prolonged or permanent.
3. Frequency of absence: irregular intervals or permanent.
4. Amount of contact with absent parent: frequent, infrequent, or never.
5. Kind of contact during absence: ranging from in-person contacts (e.g. visits, telephone calls) or to not in-person contacts (e.g. by mail).

Such profiles of parent absence will facilitate inter-familial comparisons and make it possible to ascertain which

kinds of absences are related to which effects. By effects, we refer to the consequences of the parent's absence for the family as a unit, as well as for the individual, and the relationship between family members.

It is assumed that parent-absent families will differ considerably from intact families. These differences will be analyzed in two areas. The first area relates to characteristics of the family and its members which are transitory and highly susceptible to change: immediate social, economic, or emotional conditions; problems and strains; general adjustment; self-concept; and disciplinary strategies adopted by the family unit.

The second area of the analysis relates to characteristics which are usually enduring and quite stable. It is here that we will look for coping mechanisms that are functional for the family and its members. An examination in this area will result in vital data on the following:

1. Role structures in the family unit.
2. Family cohesion.
3. Parent-child relationships.

Chart 1

ANALYTICAL PARADIGM FOR THE
PARENT IMPRISONMENT STUDY

I. Precipitating Cause

A. Parental Absence Due to Imprisonment
B. Parental Absence Due to Separation

1. Death
2. Divorce
3. Separation

II. The Missing Parent

A. Mother
B. Father

III. Duration of Time Absent

A. Prolonged
B. Permanent

IV. Frequency of Absence

A. One Time
B. More than one Time

V. Amount of Contact with Absent Parent

A. Frequently
B. Infrequently
C. None

VI. Type of Contact

A. In Person (visits, phone calls)
B. Not in Person (by mail)

VII. Family members

A. Spouse in nome
B. Children
C. Absent parent

VIII. Transient Characteristics

A. Everyday Life

1. Economic
2. Relationships

a. Intrapersonal
b. Interpersonal

B. Enduring CHaracteristics

1. Family Structure and Function
2. Patterns of Communication
3. Psychosocial make-up
4. Family Cohesion

Impacting Systems

A. Legal System
B. Educational System
C. Economic System
D. Health System
E. Recreational System

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CHAPTER 4

Preliminary Findings and Interpretations

Introduction

Questions 36-74 of the Parent's Questionnaire deal with the child's academic achievement orientations (e.g. reading, writing, arithmetic).

These frequency distributions are reported as preliminary data. Thus, Chapter 4 reflects the findings and conclusions about the development of the child's academic achievement.

36. Do you ever help (child's name) with his/her homework?

1. Yes 2. No

Response Number	Percentage
1	85.263
2	14.737

As is apparent in item number 36, the vast majority of our single parents have at one time helped their children with homework (85% versus approximately 15% who have not). This result is significant beyond the .001 level using the z approximation to the binomial.

37. Do you mainly help with reading, writing, arithmetic or all three?

001 Mainly reading
002 Mainly writing
003 Mainly arithmetic
004 Help with all three

Response Number	Percentage
1	20.779
2	6.494
3	12.987
4	59.740

For item number 37 we find that the majority of our parents (59%) help their children in all three subjects of arithmetic, reading and writing rather than any one singly. This result is significant beyond the .001 level as tested by the Chi Square Goodness of Fit Test (df = 3). Note: all of the results reported are based on 90 cases.

38. About how often do you do this?

1. Less than once a week
2. Once a week
3. Several times a week
4. Once a day
5. Many times a day

Response Number	Percentage
1	28.205
2	7.692
3	29.487
4	28.205
5	6.410

In response to the question how often (item 38) our parents responded that they help with homework on some regular basis, i.e., several times a week or at least once a day. These two responses accounted for about 58 percent of those made. The chi square value was significant beyond the .001 level (df = 4).

39. Does anyone else help (child's name) with his/her homework?

1. Father or mother
2. No
3. Other male adult
4. Other female adult
5. Older children

Response Number	Percentage
1	6.000
2	41.000
3	9.000
4	18.000
5	26.000

40. About how often is (child's name) helped with homework by this person (these people, counting all their time)?

1. Less than once a week
2. Once a week
3. Several times a week
4. Once a day
5. Many times a day

Response Number	Percentage
1	43.103
2	13.793
3	18.965
4	18.965
5	5.172

Of those parents who report that their child receives help with homework from someone else in the home, a majority (almost 57%) report that help is given once a week or less (item 40). The chi-square (df = 4) was significant beyond .001 level.

41. What are his/her favorite stories?

1. Textbook stories from school
2. Nursery Rhymes
3. Make believe story
4. Family history stories
5. Stories from Blacks in history
6. Religious stories
7. Comic characters

Response Number	Percentage
1	25.373
2	16.418
3	11.940
4	4.478
5	22.388
6	7.463
7	11.940

In response to the question on which type of story was the child's favorite (item 41), our parents did not show a strong trend except that family history and religious stories are not among the favorites to a large degree (4% and 7% respectively). This result did reach significance at the .02 level with the chi-square test (df = 6).

42. Does (child's name) have things to read, such as books (other than school books), magazines, newspapers, and comics here at home?

If no: 002

If yes:

001 Black oriented magazines or newspapers

008 News magazines (e.g. Time)

003 Local newspapers (e.g. Post, Star)

004 Interest magazines of any kind (e.g. Family Circle)

005 Comics

006 Sports Magazines

007 Books

Response Number	Percentage
1	26.804
2	3.093
3	7.216
4	11.340
5	5.155
6	6.186
7	38.144
8	2.062

The most frequently provided reading materials for the children (item 42) are Black oriented magazines or newspapers and books (approximately 27% and 38% respectively). These results were significant at .05 level with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov one sample test.

43. If you could have your wish, how far in school would you like (child's name) to go?

Response Number	Percentage
1	0.000
2	0.000
3	0.000
4	0.000
5	0.000
6	0.000
7	0.000
8	0.000
9	0.000

(Chart continued on next page)

Response Number	Percentage
10	0.000
11	0.000
12	11.111
13	52.525
14	36.364

Not a parent wanted his child to stop school before finishing high school, and a majority (52% wanted the child to finish college (item 43). This result is significant at beyond the .001 level with chi-square (df = 13).

44. Since things don't always go as we want them to, how far do you think (child's name) will actually go in school?

Response Number	Percentage
1	0.00
2	0.00
3	0.00
4	0.00
5	0.00
6	0.00
7	0.00
8	0.00
9	1.031
10	5.155
11	2.062
12	36.082
13	40.206
14	15.464

These parents thought that in spite of the problems that may be encountered, the child would finish high school or college (item 44). These responses accounted for 75% of those made. Again, the results were significant beyond the .001 level with chi-square (df = 13).

45. In your opinion, what would present (child's name) from going as far as you wish he/she would go?

001 Dislike of school
002 Lack of money (financial)
003 Negative peer group influences (e.g. drugs
004 Getting involved with person of opposite sex
005 Lack of interest
006 Pressure from home situation

Response Number	Percentage
1	12.048
2	37.349
3	9.639
4	20.482
5	15.663
6	4.819

As the data for item 45 indicate, these parents believe that financial problems (lack of money) would be the major reason for the child's not going as far in school as the parent would wish. This result was significant beyond the .001 level with chi-square (df = 5).

46. What do you do if (child's name) asks a question that you can't answer?

001 Answer question later
002 Ask relative
003 Ask close friend
004 Ask minister
005 Ask social worker
006 Ask school personnel
007 Ask doctor
008 Ask friend with children

Response Number	Percentage
1	67.500
2	17.500
3	6.250
4	3.750
5	0.000
6	2.500
7	1.250
8	1.250

As majority of these parent's report that when asked a question by the child which they were unable to answer (item 46), they answer the question at a later time (67%). This finding is significant at less than the .01 level with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov One Sample Test.

49. People have different ideas about what students are like in school. What is your idea of a good student?

001 One who causes no trouble
002 One who makes A's and B's
003 One who makes no failing grades
004 One who applies what he learns at school
005 One who is willing to learn

Response Number	Percentage
1	12.088
2	4.396
3	3.297
4	29.670
5	50.549

These parents believe that a good student (item 49) is one who is willing to learn or one who applies what he learns in school. T-e percentage selecting these alternatives was 50% and 29%, respectively. The chi-square value was significant beyond the .001 level (df = 4).

50. People also have different ideas about what teachers are like in school. What is your idea of a good teacher? (Interviewer: If response is "I don't know," Probe: "Is there anything that you would think would make a good teacher?")

001 One who understands, takes an interest and respects the child
002 One who maintains parent-teacher relationships
003 One who takes an interest in community
004 More than one of choices

Response Number	Percentage
1	73.118
2	7.527
3	1.075
4	18.280

Approximately three-fourths of these parents believe that a good teacher is one who understands, takes an interest and respects the child (item 50). This result is significant beyond the .001 level with chi-square (df =3).

51. Do you think the buildings and equipment for the school that (child's name) does to are as good as or better than those for most schools in the city or do you think the buildings and equipment are worse in (child's name) school?

001 Better 003 Worse than

002 As good as

Response Number	Percentage
1	28.723
2	53.191
3	18.085

A majority of these parents (53%) believe that the buildings and equipment in the schools that their children attend are as good as most of the schools in the city (item 51). This finding is significant beyond the .001 level with chi-square (df = 2).

52. Do you think that most teachers in the school that (child's name) goes to are as good as teachers in most other schools in the city?

001 Yes 002 No

Response Number	Percentage
1	82.558
2	17.442

A large percentage (82%) of these parents believe that most of their children's teachers are as good as most other teachers in the city (item 52). These data are significant at less than the .001 level with chi-square (df = 1).

53. Do you feel that most teachers in the school that (child's name) goes to pay enough attention to all children, or do you think that they neglect some children?

001 Neglect some children 002 Pay attention to all children

Response Number	Percentage
1	52.222
2	47.778

A slight majority (52%) of these parents believe that most teachers in their children's schools neglect some children (item 53). This result did not reach the .05 level of significance with chi-square.

55. Do you think the schools in D.C. are teaching children the things that they should or do you think they teach useless or even harmful things?

001 Teach what the should

002 Teach harmful or useless things

Response Number	Percentage
1	70.000
2	30.000

These parents believe (70%) that the D. C. schools are teaching what should be taught (item 55). This finding is significant at less than the .001 level with chi-square (df = 1).

56. Do you think that schools would be better or worse if parents had more control over them (the schools)?

001 Better

002 Worse

003 About the same

Response Number	Percentage
1	44.444
2	38.889
3	16.667

The issue of greater parental control over the schools has almost evenly divided our respondents as indicated by the data for item 56. Slightly more believe that the schools would be better with increased parental control (44% compared to 39% who have the opposite view). Only because so few people (17%) felt that the school would be about the same with increased parental control did the results reach the .01 level of significance with chi-square (df = 2).

57. Do you think that the teachers understand or have any idea of the kinds of problems faced by people like you?

001 Yes

002 No idea

Response Number	Percentage
1	55.319
2	44.681

Although a majority of these parents believe that teachers understand the problem of people like them (55%), the results were not significant for item 57.

58. Do you think there is anything that you yourself can do to improve the schools in this neighborhood?

001 Yes

If no: Why:

002 Don't attend PTA or PACTS meetings

003 Difficult to see appropriate school official

004 Nothing would be accomplished anyway

005 Can't get others to act

Response Number	Percentage
1	75.789
2	4.211
3	0.000
4	9.474
5	10.526

Three-fourths of these parents believe that they can do something to improve the neighborhood schools (item 58). This finding was significant at less than the .001 level with chi-square (df = 4).

59. Do you think that most classrooms in your ward/area are over-crowded?

001 Yes	002 No
Response Number	Percentage
1	64.894
2	35.106

When asked whether the classrooms in their ward were overcrowded (item 59), a majority of these parents responded "yes" (65%). This result is significant beyond the .01 level with chi-square (df = 1).

60. Do you think that most teachers really want to talk with parents about school?

001 Yes	002 No
Response Number	Percentage
1	67.368
2	32.632

A majority (67%) of these parents believe that most teachers really want to talk with parents about school (item 60). This result is significant at less than the .001 level with chi-square (df = 1).

62. Do you feel that teachers make children doubt and question things that they are told at home?

Yes: In what way? 002 No

001 His achievement of status

003 Status of child's family

004 Appropriateness of dress

005 Attitudes on religion

006 Influence of neighborhood environment on child's behavior

Response Number	Percent
1	10.127
2	55.696
3	11.392
4	6.329
5	0.000
6	16.456

A majority of our respondents (56%) do not feel that teachers make children doubt and question things that they are told at home(item 62). This result is significant at less than the .001 level with chi-square (df = 5).

63. Do you think most teachers in the school (child's name) goes to are good examples for him/her?

001 Yes 002 No

Response Number	Percentage
1	80.000
2	20.000

A large majority (80%) of these parents believe that their children's teachers are good examples for the children (item 63). This finding was significant at less than the .001 level with chi-square (df = 1).

64. Do you think that parents usually are to blame when children do not work at school?

001 Yes 003 Sometimes

002 No 004 Partially

Response Number	Percentages
1	34.000
2	30.000
3	29.000
4	7.000

There was no clear trend in the responses for item 64. These parents are divided on the question of parental blame in the child's poor performance in school. The data were significant at less than the .001 level due to the small number of respondents who felt that parents were partially responsible to the child's poor work at school.

66. If you disagree with the school principal and administrator, do you feel that you can do anything about it?

001 Yes

If no: Why:

002 Principal too busy

003 Not active in PTA or PACTS

004 Don't know where to go next

Response Number	Percentage
1	86.021
2	4.361
3	2.151
4	7.527

More than three-fourths (86%0 of these parents believe that there is something they can do about disagreements they may have with the school principal or administrators (item 66.) This findings is signficiant at less than the .001 level with chi-square (df = 3).

67. Do you feel that most children have to be made to learn?

001 Yes

002 No

003 In some things

Response Number	Percentage
1	24.242
2	62.629
3	13.131

A majority (62%0 of these parents believe that children do not have to be made to learn (item 67). This finding is significant at less that the .001 level with chi-square (df = 2).

68. Do you feel that D. C. school teachers make children feel ashame because there is only one parent at home?

Yes, specify: 002 No

001 Uses absence of parent as excuse when child errs

003 Makes frequent reference to need for two parents in home for normal development

004 If teacher discovered home situation, makes changes in way he/she teaches that child

Response Number	Percentage
1	3.797
2	73.418
3	13.924
4	8.861

Almost three-fourths (73%) of these parents do not believe that D. C. school teachers make children feel ashame because there is only one parent at home (item 68). This finding is significant at less than the .001 level with chi-square (df = 3).

69. In general, do teachers make children ashamed?

001 Yes 002 No

Response Number	Percentage
1	31.818
2	68.182

A majority of these (685) parents do not believe that in general teachers make children ashame (item 69). This result is significant at less than the .001 level with chi-square (df = 1).

70. Has (child's name) ever been made ashame in school?

Yes, by whom? 002 No

001 peers 005 School counselor

003 teacher 006 Nurse or other health

004 school principal personnel (hygienst)

Response Number	Percentage
1	20.513
2	15.385
3	58.974
4	5.128
5	0.000
6	0.000

Of those parents who believe that teachers in the D. C. school make children feel asname (39 out of 100), a slight majority (59%) of them report that their children have been made to feel asname by a teacher (item 70). The result is significant at less than the .001 level with chi-square (df = 5).

71. Compared to other children in school, does (child's name) have:

001 Fewer problems
002 About average problems
003 More problems

Response Number	Percentage
1	32.990
2	59.794
3	7.216

A slight majority (59%) of these parents believe that their child has about average problems compared to other children in school (item 71). This result is significant at less than the .001 level with chi-square (df = 2).

72. Compared to other children, how does (child's name) get along with teacher?

001 Better than most children
002 About average
003 Not as well as other children

Response Number	Percentage
1	34.694
2	59.184
3	6.122

A slight majority (59%) of these parents believe that their child gets along about average with the teacher (item 72) compared to other children. This finding is significant at less than the .001 level with chi-square (df = 2).

73. Compared to other children in his/her class, how is (child's name) doing in his school work?

001 Better than
002 About average
003 Not as well as other children

Response Number	Percentage
1	39.394
2	48.485
3	12.121

Most of these parents (48%) feel that their child is doing about average in his/her school work compared to the other children (item 73). This result is significant at less than the .001 level with chi-square (df = 2).

74. Where would you go or whom would you call to get advice or help with educational problems? (IF "SCHOOL," PROBE: FROM WHOM AT SCHOOL, HIS/HER POSITION)

001 Relative
002 Neighbor
003 Family social worker
004 Child's teacher
005 School counselor
006 Principal
007 Other school personnel

Response Number	Percentage
1	6.452
2	0.000
3	1.075
4	29.032
5	22.581
6	23.656
7	17.204

No clear trends exists in the responses to item 74 which sought to determine where the parent went with educational problems. The significant chi-square is due to the small observed frequencies for some alternatives.

Conclusion

We can draw some positive conclusions about the educational concerns of one-parent Black households from our questions. Our respondents take an active role in assisting with their children's homework. Despite the fact that most of these parents have to work to support their families, they take the time to help the child on a regular basis. This help extends to several areas of study, e.g. reading, writing, and arithmetic. Another interesting finding on this matter is that these parents seem to take sole responsibility for helping the study child with his/her homework.

This concern for academic enhancement was a recurring trend throughout the data. These parents provide various kinds of reading material for the child. A majority of them provide some type of Black oriented periodical for the family's reading pleasure. In addition there was a large spread in the type of story which the child favored most.

Additional support for this theme is found in the several questions about the amount of education desired for the child. No parent wanted his child to leave school before finishing high school, and a majority felt that their child would finish high school despite financial hardships in

the home. These parents while not desiring to have their children drop out of school to take a job, nevertheless believe that the lack of money would be a major deterrent to the child's completing high school.

The pattern of responses which our survey has elicited from these Black parents of one-parent households is one that is rarely, if ever, reported in the literature. These parents are actively involved in the child's day-to-day educational activities and they are highly supportive of the child's education. One would hardly expect these findings if one accepted the typical conclusions drawn from the previous literature on Black one-parent households. These families are not in a state of disintegration as has been reported, but rather they display a healthy degree of conesion.

The Parent's Questionnaire contained a number of questions which were designed to tap the parents' attitudes toward their children's teachers and school buildings. Our respondents believe that a good teacher is one who understands, takes an interest in, and respects the child. With this characterization of what constitutes a good teacher, these parents for the most part believe that the teachers in their local school are as good as teachers in other areas of the city. However, slightly more than

half of these parents believe that most teachers in their child's school neglect some children. This apparent contradictory negative view becomes more understandable when one looks at the finding that among those parents reporting teacher neglect, a majority attribute it to overcrowded conditions in the classroom. This can be interpreted as not so much a negative view of the teacher as a negative reaction to conditions that are impacting negatively on their children's education.

Although a vast majority of these parents believe that the District schools are teaching what should be taught, they are divided over the issue of whether parental control would improve the schools. It is important to note that only slightly less than half of the parents interviewed express a view that more parental control will improve the schools. It would appear essential for the District Public School chief admistrators to be cognizant of this public sentiment for a greater controlling hand in the policies of the school. Additionally, our data revealed that parents view teachers as desiring to talk with them about school.

These parents believe that their children's teachers set good examples for the children to model. A large majority of these parents are confident in the teachers'

handling of their children's problems. Almost three-fourths of them report that they do not believe that teachers make children feel ashamed because there is only one parent in the home. However, many of the remaining one-fourth of these parents report that their own children have been made to feel ashamed.

These parents view their children's educational experience as being comparable to the average child. Their children are reported to be earning average grades compared to other children, and seen as having as average kind of relationship with the teacher. Finally these parents report that their children are experiencing average educational problems.

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APPENDIX A

Employment Application

Employment Application

Section I

Name: _____
Address: _____

Telephone Number: Residence _____ Business _____
Date of birth: _____ SS No. _____
Marital status _____ Position held by spouse _____
Position desired: _____ Spouse's monthly salary _____
Do you own a car? _____ Year and Make _____
Are you renting or buying (circle one) Monthly payment _____
Are you seeking full time ☐ or part-time ☐ employment
Hours of availability From _____ to _____

Section II Employment History

Organization: _____
Address: _____

Phone Number _____ Immediate Supervisor _____
Monthly salary _____
Entry date: _____ Exit date _____
Month/Day/Year Month/Day/Year
Reason for leaving: _____
OFFICIAL USE ONLY:

_____
_____

Organization: _____
Address: _____

Phone Number _____ Immediate Supervisor _____
Annual salary _____
Entry date: _____ Exit date _____
Month/Day/Year Month/Day/Year
Reason for Leaving: _____
OFFICIAL USE ONLY:

_____
_____

Organization: _____
Address: _____

Phone Number _____ Immediate Supervisor _____
Annual salary _____
Entry date: _____ Exit date _____
Month/Day/Year Month/Day/Year
Reason for Leaving: _____
OFFICIAL USE ONLY:

_____
_____

Organization: _____
Address: _____

Phone Number _____ Immediate Supervisor _____
Annual salary _____
Entry date: _____ Exit date _____
Month/Day/Year Month/Day/Year
Reason for Leaving: _____
OFFICIAL USE ONLY:

_____
_____

Section III Future Career Objectives (Brief statement):

_____
_____
_____
_____

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

_____
_____

Section IV Why do you want to work with us? (Brief statement):

_____
_____
_____
_____

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

_____
_____

Section V Education History (List last school attended first):

Institution: _____
Address: _____
_____

Entry date _____ Exit date _____
Month/Year Month/Year

Graduate? yes ☐ no ☐ Credit hours _____

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

_____
_____

Institution: _____
Address: _____
_____

Entry date _____ Exit date _____
Month/Year Month/Year

Graduate? yes ☐ no ☐ Credit hours _____

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

_____
_____

Institution: _____
Address: _____
_____

Entry date _____ Exit date _____
Month/Year Month/Year

Graduate? yes ☐ no ☐ Credit hours _____

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

_____
_____

Section VI List Special skills and interests

_____
_____
_____

APPENDIX B

Tester Questionnaire A

TESTER QUESTIONNAIRE A

Each question consists of a sentence in which one word is missing; a blank indicates where the word has been removed from the sentence. Beneath each sentence are five words, one of which is the missing word. You are to select the missing word by deciding which one of the five words best fits in with the meaning of the sentence.

Sample Question

We have worked hard all day so that by evening we were quite ( ).

a. small b. tired c. old
d. untrained e. intelligent

If you understand the sample sentence you will realize that "tired" is the missing work because none of the other words fits in with the meaning of the sentence. Next, on the answer sheet, you will find the line numbered the same as the question and blacken the space which has the same letter as the missing word.

You will have 15 minutes to answer the 30 questions.

1. Dick apparently had little ( ) in his own ideas for he desperately feared being laughed at.

   a. interest b. depth c. confidence
   d. difficulty e. continuity

2. No money should be wasted on luxuries until all ( ) have been provided for.

   f. assets g. opportunities h. resources
   j. proceeds k. necessities

3. France is still, if not the only country in the world where ( ) is an art, at least the only one where the dressmaker and the milliner are artists.

   a. democracy b. behavior c. society
   d. dress e. conversation

4. The ( ) of the animals was astounding; they would sit unmoving as we walked about and took their pictures.

   f. stupidity g. tameness h. grace
   j. shyness k. photography

5. He told the story apparently with indifference, yet with ( ) enough to fix the words in his hearers' memory.

   a. jurisdiction b. literacy c. emphasis
   d. insight e. ecstasy

6. Down with them all! I am taking my ( ) for all the humiliation I endured in my youth.

   f. revenge g. punishment h. reward
   j. time k. opportunity

7. At sea he was an amateur, not an expert, and thus for the first time became ( ) instead of a man of action.

   a. authority b. instigator c. onlooker
   d. outcast e. inspiration

8. Science, art, literature, philosophy, and religion are the institutions that ( ) great civilizations from mere groups of villages.

   f. regulate g. extricate h. distinguish
   j. release k. save

9. It often happens to those in a bad humor, it seemed to him that everyone regarded him with ( ) and that he was in everybody's way.

a. aversion b. curiosity c. respect
d. understanding e. fear

10. People in temperate climates, faced with many ( ), gain resources within themselves which eventually lead to a greater prosperity than that possessed by people where living conditions are easier.

f. obstacles g. directions h. advantages
j. possibilities k. experiences

11. He was fired from a job sorting oranges because he was not able to ( ) well enough.

a. produce b. sample c. walk
d. discriminate e. dye

12. During the course of the trial he exhausted every form of ( ) in an attempt to prove his innocence.

f. camouflage g. intricate h. appeal
j. credit k. insistence

13. To make you understand my point, I must go back a bit and seem to change the subject, but the ( ) will soon be plain.

a. correction b. effect c. origin
d. controversy e. connection

14. In pace, the industrial revolution has been not a revolution at all but a ( ) change, dependent on the energy and ingenuity of individuals and limited by the scarcity of men possessing these qualities.

f. gradual g. sudden h. deliberate
j. doubtful k. debatable

15. The shortage of wage labor in the farming districts ( ) the invention of labor-saving devices

a. delayed b. threatened c. determined
d. quickened e. characterized

16. You deplore heresy only if you accept an orthodox; you talk of damnation only if you believe in the possibility of ( ).

f. recantation g. salvation h. heresy
j. perfection k. error

17. Because of the system of growing crops until the land was ( ), cotton culture was ever on the move in quest of fresh and fertile soils.

a. exhausted b. cleared c. reclaimed
d. improved e. satiated

18. The paper currency did not depreciate to a great degree, but it tended to ( ) with the success or failure of allied armies and with the conditions of the crops and trade.

f. balance g. diminish h. circulate
j. stabilize k. fluctuate

19. Himself a man who had vainly striven against ( ), he readily accepted the dollar sign as the hallmark of success.

a. graft b. materialism c. suppression
d. defear e. proverty

20. To be dependent upon them would embitter my whole life, I should feel begging to be far less ( ).

f. criminal g. degrading h. restricting
j. mistaken k. crucial

1. Even when the profession is fairly lucrative, its gains are ( ) by the fact that the work must all be done by the practitioners's own hand.

a. obscured b. exaggerated c. increases
d. developed e. limited

22. The early Puritans sought to fortify themselves ( ) by acquiring the habit of self-denial.

f. generosity g. temptation h. happiness
j. life k. persecution

23. Consumption of protein declines in periods of economic stress because it is the most ( ) of all essential food elements.

a. desirable b. nutritious c. concentrated
d. stable e. expensive

24. They could tell from the dark funnel-shaped cloud coming their way that a tornado was probably ( ).

f. present g. crucial h. normal
j. over k. imminent

25. The diplomatic demonstrance was so ( ) that it was almost equivalent to a declaration of war.

a. well-worded b. astute c. strong
d. intentional e. clever

26. When the ( ) of universal suffrage based on universal ignorance was perceived, education was given a new significance.

f. equality g. danger h. loss
j. usefulness k. success

27. The art of reading comes without undue pains to a great many of us, but it is a gift which is certainly not ( ).

a. exclusive b. profitable c. appreciated
d. universal e. refused

28. Assuming that most writing problems are within the scope of the sentence, the author concentrated on the ( ) as the focal point of his freshman English textbook.

f. paragraph g. theme h. sentence
j. topic k. grammar

29. The ( ) of living, the arrangement of the day so that he might be on time everywhere and leave no detail unattended absorbed the greater part of his vital energy.

a. necessity b. adventure c. awareness
d. exhaustion e. mechanics

30. In trying to build up a new style of design in opposition to the technical potentialities of the century, he was just as much an ( ) as the architect who disquises a modern town hall as a Greek temple.

f. explorer g. atheist h. introvert
j. excapist k. optimist

STOP. If you finish before time is called, check your work on this part.

APPENDIX C

Tester Questionnaire B

TESTER QUESTIONNAIRE B

1. What is your sex?

   a. male

   b. female

2. What is the highest level of education you have received?

   a. grade school only (up to 8th grade)

   b. some high school but not a high school diploma

   c. high school diploma

   d. some college (how much)

   e. a college degree

3. How many children do you have?

   a. 0

   b. 1

   c. 2

   d. 3

   e. 4 or more

4. Do you have a child under five years of age?

   a. yes

   b. no

5. Do you prefer long conversations with one or two others or extended group or party type conversations?

   a. one or two others

   b. bigger groups

6. Do you enjoy playing cards or other social type games (Monopoly, Scrabble, etc.)?

   a. yes

   b. no

7. Have you read a novel or a book for pleasure during the past two months?

   a. yes

   b. no

8. About how much time on the average each day do you spend watching television or listening to the radio?

   a. less than an hour

   b. 1-3 hours

   c. 4-6 hours

   d. 6-8 hours

   e. more than 8 hours

9. Do you normally enjoy being with young children?

   a. yes

   b. no

10. Do you mind answering questions like these about yourself?

    a. yes

    b. no

11. Do you think you can do a job as a tester?

    a. yes

    b. no

12. Are any members of your immediate family teachers?

    a. yes

    b. no

13. Have you had any experience, such as Sunday School teaching or working with Brownies, that was related to working with young children?

    a. yes

    b. no

14. Have you ever lived in a community similar to the one your testing center is in? Which one? Underline.

    a. Suburb. . .20% more Black

    b. Suburb. . .95% or more white

    c. Inner city. . .95% Black

    d. Other

15. How long did you live in such a community or communities?

    a. never

    b. 1 year or less

    c. 2-5 years

    d. 6-10 years

    e. over 10 years

16. Do you live there now?

    a. yes

    b. no

17. Do you like the children you will be testing or observing?

    a. yes

    b. no

18. Do you feel that your talents are being well used (the work is neither too hard nor too easy) in this job?

    a. yes

    b. no

19. What is your age?

20. Would you ever punish your own child by striking or spanking him?

    a. yes

    b. no

21. Are you married?

    a. yes

    b. no

22. If you are married, do you find time to do things with your family?

    a. yes, often

    b. yes, sometimes

    c. no, rarely

    d. no, never

23. Do you consider yourself a superior tester or observer?

    a. yes

    b. no

24. Do you expect that you will want to continue to test or observe after this current year?

    a. yes

    b. no

25. Has your job in this study given you an interest in continuing to work with young children?

    a. yes

    b. no

Questions 26-31

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about disadvantaged or minority students?

26. They can learn as well as anyone if they have proper instruction.

    a. agree

    b. disagree

27. No matter how good the instruction, these pupils will score lower than middle class school children.

    a. agree

    b. disagree

28. They do not want to learn.

    a. agree

    b. disagree

29. They want to learn but do not have right background for school work.

    a. agree

    b. disagree

30. It is scientifically proven that such students are capable of doing regular school work.

    a. agree

    b. disagree

31. It is scientifically proven that such students will never do as well as other students in the schools.

    a. agree

    b. disagree

32. In your opinion, which of the following is the most likely cause of students failing to learn in school?

a. lack of ability

b. poor motivation

c. bad home conditions

d. too many classroom disturbances

e. reading problems

33. Do you agree that working with disadvantaged children is fun and exciting?

a. yes

b. no

34. Do you think that children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds require a different kind of teaching than children from middle class backgrounds?

a. yes

b. no

35. "Present day poor people expect too much from the schools. You have to work for an education. It is not given to you." Do you agree or disagree with that statement?

a. agree

b. disagree

36. Some commentators have either said or implied that school life and school activity may actually "kill" or deaden students' natural curiosity and inquisitiveness. Do you agree with this idea in general.

a. yes

b. no

37. From what you've seen, do you feel that education can serve as a powerful tool in helping poor people get out of the slums?

a. yes

b. no

38. "I would eliminate the schools and given parents the necessary books and self-teaching materials." Do you agree or disagree with this statement?

    a. agree

    b. disagree

39. About what percentage of the parents of the boys and girls you have been working with do you feel are really concerned with their children's education?

    a. 100%

    b. 75%

    c. 50%

    d. 25%

    e. 0%

40. What do you think is the major reason why some parents are not concerned about their children's education?

    (WRITE YOUR ANSWER ON THE BACK OF THE ANSWER SHEET.)

41. Do you feel that it would help to improve the academic performance and/or behavior of a child in school if his parents were concerned?

    a. yes

    b. no

42. Do you think that it is part of a teacher's responsibility to improve school-community relations?

    a. yes

    b. no

43. Do you think that it is necessary for the pupils to like their teacher in order for them to learn?

    a. yes

    b. no

44. "Most children would be better off if they went to school--except perhaps for a little basic reading instruction." Do you agree with this point of view?

a. yes

b. no

45. "Black children would learn better in all black schools with all black teachers." Do you agree or disagree with this statement?

a. agree

b. disagree

46. "Most white teachers are racist." Do you agree or disagree?

a. agree

b. disagree

47. If you are displeased with your own child's behavior, what do you usually do <u>first</u>?

a. use physical force to make him do what you want

b. yell at him until he does what you want

c. talk quietly to him and persuade him to cooperate

d. allow him a short period of time to shape up without action by you

e. other (WRITE YOUR ANSWER ON THE BACK OF THE ANSWER SHEET)

48. Do you think that a study like this can really find out anything worthwhile?

a. yes

b. no

49. Parents lack knowledge of the value of an education in present-day society.

a. agree

b. disagree

APPENDIX D

Questionnaire A

Name of Measure: Questionnaire A

Variables Measured: Transactional Analysis approach to assessing resident's perpective about child, guardian, and life situation.

Grade Level Usage

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Suitable for females of all reading levels

Data Collection Method:

Group Test ___X___ Interview _____

Individual Test ____ Observation _____

Estimated Administration Time: 45 (min.)

Brief Statement of Procedure:

Test administered to a group of persons, with respondent recording responses. Respondent scales position attitude scale.

Minimum Requirements for the Administrator-Observer:

High school reading level

Sample Items:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither nor Agree	Slightly Agree	Strongly Agree

Rate yourself on a scale of 1 to 5 (1) if you strongly disagree, or five (5) if you strongly agree.

1. I'm o.k. you're o.k.
2. I'm o.k. you're not o.k.
3. I'm not o.k., you're o.k.
4. I'm not o.k., you're not o.k.

APPENDIX E

Separation Experiences (Supplement)

Name of Measure: Separation Experiences (Supplement)

Variables Measured: recidivism, family counseling, adult post-separation adjustment, attitudes on conjugal visitation

Grade Level Usage

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Suitable for parents of all reading levels

Data Collection Method:

Group Test _____ Interview _____

Individual Test __X__ Observation _____

Estimated Administration Time (min.): 15

Brief Statement of Procedure:

Interviewer reads items and records interviewee response

Minimum Requirements for the Administrator-Observer:

High school reading level

Sample Items:

Do you feel that your separation is a temporary or permanent condition?

001 Temporary
002 Permanent
003 Widowed

How many times has spouse been arrested?
0___(number of times)

What feelings does your (child's name) have due to your spouse's absence?

001 Depression
002 Anziety
003 Happiness
004 Sadness
005 Anger
006 Tension or less tension
007 other _____

(Note: responses below)
what otner feelings?___
Any other feelings?____
Any other feelings?____